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AN

APOLOGY

FOR THE PEOPLE

CALLED

METHODISTS;

CONTAINING

A CONCISE ACCOUNT

OF THEIR

ORIGIN AND PROGRESS, DOCTRINE, DISCIPLINE,
AND DESIGNS:

HUMBLY SUBMITTED TO THE CONSIDERATION

OF THE

Friends of true Christianity.

BY JOSEPH BENSON.

We desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: For as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against. ACTS xxviii. 22.

Be ready always to give an answer to every man, that asketh you, a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear: having a good conscience; that whereas, they speak evil of you, as of evil-doers, they may be ashamed, that falsely accuse your good conversation in CHRIST. 1 PET. iii. 15, 16.

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PREFACE.

THE subsequent Account was compiled, and is now published, at the request of several intelligent and judicious Persons, who are of opinion, that it is our indispensable duty, in justice to ourselves, and the cause in which we are engaged, to make the Public acquainted with our Principles and Designs: and thereby, as far as possible, to prevent our "good from being evil spoken of." It is true, various Books and Pamphlets have been published, by the late REV. JOHN WESLEY and others, with this view; but some of these are out of print, others of them were better adapted to the time in which they were written, than to the present: and none of them comprise all the particulars, of which it seems necessary the Public should be informed.

A *concise and clear Account*, therefore, of the *Origin and Progress*, *Doctrine*, *Discipline*, *and Designs*, of the METHODISTS, of late in connection with the Rev. J. Wesley, and now, as formerly, united in one Body, is still a *desideratum* in the

Nation. To supply this, I have endeavoured to collect and arrange, under proper heads, those materials with which I was amply furnished,* and which appeared to be calculated to answer the end proposed. I have also added, as occasion required, such observations as naturally arose out of the subjects under consideration, and seemed proper to afford the Reader a just and full view of them.

J. B.

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* The Rev. Mr. Wesley's Journals;---his "Appeals to Men of Reason and Religion,"----his "Plain Account of the People called Methodists,"---his "History of Methodism,"---"Letter to the Rev. Dr. Conyers Middleton;---the Narratives of some of his Biographers, with other Books and Papers, have been consulted. But to avoid trouble and enlarging the size of the book, they are not always referred to when quoted.

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A
CONCISE ACCOUNT
OF THE
METHODISTS.

SECTION I.

OF MR. WESLEY'S CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH, HIS RESIDENCE AT OXFORD, AND THE ORIGIN OF THE METHODISTS THERE.

IT is generally known, that the late Rev. JOHN WESLEY, the second son of the Rev. Samuel Wesley, Rector of Epworth, in the county of Lincoln, was, under God, the father of the *People called Methodists*, and the founder of their Societies. This very extraordinary and most respectable man, was born June the 17th, (old style), 1703, and when yet a child was deeply impressed with a sense of the importance of religion, and inclined to spend his life in endeavouring to promote its interests. He partook of the *Lord's Supper*, when only eight years of age, and made it his constant care at that early period of his life to practise every Christian virtue that was in his power.

At eleven, he was sent to the Charter-house-school, where he soon became distinguished for his diligence and progress in learning; so that in the year

1719, when his father was hesitating in what situation he should place his younger brother Charles, his elder brother Samuel writes thus of him;—"My brother Jack, I can faithfully assure you, gives you no manner of discouragement from breeding your third son a scholar."

When seventeen, he was elected to Christ-Church, Oxford, where he pursued his studies to great advantage. When about twenty-one, "he appeared," says Mr. Badcock, "the very sensible and acute Collegian;—a young fellow of the finest classical taste, of the most liberal and manly sentiments." Towards the close of this year, he began to think of entering into Deacon's Orders, and this led him to reflect on the importance of the ministerial office, the proper motives of entering into it, and the necessary qualifications for it. On examining the step he intended to take, through all its consequences to himself and others, it appeared of the greatest magnitude, and made so deep an impression on his mind, that he became more serious than usual, and applied himself with more attention to subjects of divinity. Some doubts arising in his mind, on the motives, which ought to influence a man in taking Holy Orders, he proposed them to his father, with a frankness that manifested the integrity of his heart. His father's answer is dated Jan. 26, 1725:—"As to what you mention of entering into Holy Orders, it is indeed a great work. I am pleased to find you think it so, as well as that you do not admire a callow Clergyman, any more than I do. As to the *motives*, if it is no harm to desire getting into that office, even as Eli's sons, to eat a piece of bread, certainly a desire and intention to lead a stricter life, and a belief one should do so, is a better reason: Though this should, by all means be begun before, or, ten to one, it will deceive us afterwards. But if a man be unwilling or not desirous to enter into orders, it is easy to guess, whether he has so much as common honesty when he says that he trusts he is 'moved to it by the Holy Ghost.' But the principal spring and motive, to which all others should be secondary, must undoubtedly be the *Glory of* God, *and the edification of our neighbour*. And woe to him, who with any meaner leading view, attempts so sacred a work. For this he should take all the care he possibly can, with the advice of wiser and older men (especially imploring the direction and assistance of ALMIGHTY GOD, with all humility, sincerity, and intention of mind,) to qualify himself. The knowledge of the Languages is a considerable help in this matter, which, I thank God, all my three sons have. But this must be prosecuted to the thorough understanding the original text of the Holy Scriptures, by conversing with them long and constantly. You ask me, 'Which is the best Comment on the Bible.' I answer, the Bible itself. For the several paraphrases and translations of it in the Polygot, compared with the original and with one another, are, in my opinion, to an honest, devout, industrious, and humble man, infinitely preferable to any Comment I ever saw. By all this you see, I am not for your going too hastily into Orders. When I am for your taking them, you shall know: And it is not impossible I may then be with you, if God so long spare the life and health of your affectionate father,

SAMUEL WESLEY."

His mother wrote to him, in February, on the same subject, and seemed desirous that he should enter into Orders as soon as possible. "I think," says she, "the sooner you are a *Deacon* the better, because it may be an inducement to greater application to practical divinity, which of all other studies, I humbly conceive to be the best for candidates for Orders." His mother was remarkable for taking every opportunity to impress a serious sense of religion on the minds of her children; and she was too watchful to let the present occasion pass unimproved. "The alteration of your temper," says she, in the same letter, "occasioned in me much speculation. I, who am apt to be sanguine, hope it may proceed from the operation of the Holy Spirit; that, by taking off your relish for earthly enjoyments, he may prepare and dispose your mind for a more serious application to things of a more sublime and spiritual nature. If it be so, happy are you if you cherish those dispositions, and now, in good earnest, resolve to make religion the business of your life; for, after all, *that is the one thing*, that, strictly speaking, *is necessary;* all things beside are comparatively little to the purposes of life. I heartily wish you would now enter upon a strict examination of yourself, that you may know whether you have a reasonable hope of salvation by JESUS CHRIST. If you have, the satisfaction of *knowing it* will abundantly reward your pains: If you have not, you will find a more reasonable occasion for tears, than can be met with in a Tragedy. This matter deserves great consideration by all, but especially by those designed for the Ministry, who ought, above all things, to *make their* *calling and election sure*, lest, after having preached to others, they themselves should be cast away."

These advices and exhortations of his parents had a proper influence upon him. He began to apply himself with diligence to the study of divinity in his leisure hours, and became more desirous of entering into Orders. He wrote home to his father on this subject, who informed him, in answer, that he was then inclined, that he should take Orders, that summer:—"But in the first place," says he, "if you love yourself or me, pray heartily."

About this time, he met with Bishop Taylor's, "Rules and Exercises of Holy Living and Dying." "In reading several parts of this book," says he, "I was exceedingly affected, especially with that part, which relates to *purity of intention*. Instantly I resolved to dedicate all my life to God, all my thoughts, words and actions, being thoroughly convinced there is no medium, but that every part of my life must either be a sacrifice to God, or myself, that is, in effect, to the devil." Accordingly he now began to take a more exact account, than he had done before, of the manner wherein he spent his time, writing down how he had employed every hour.

The next year, meeting with Kempis' "Christian Pattern," the nature and extent of *inward religion*, (the religion of the heart,) began to appear to him in a stronger light than ever. He saw that giving even *all his life to God*, (supposing it possible to do this and go no further,) would profit him nothing, unless he gave his *heart*, yea, *all his heart*, to him also. He saw that simplicity of intention and purity of affection, *one design* in all we speak and do, and *one desire* ruling all our tempers, are indeed the wings of the soul, without which she can never ascend to the Mount of God.

A year or two after, Mr. Law's "Serious Call to a Holy Life," and also a small Tract on "Christian Perfection," by the same author, were put into his hands. These convinced him more than ever of the absolute impossibility of being *half a Christian.* He determined, therefore, through divine Grace, (the absolute necessity of which, he was deeply sensible of,) to be all devoted to God, to give him all his soul, body, and substance. In consequence of this resolution, his letters to his parents carried a savour of religion, which before they had wanted. This made his father say to him in a letter, "If you be but what you write, you and I shall be happy, and you will much alleviate my misfortune." He soon found that his son was not double-minded. The time of his ordination drew near. His father wrote to him again on this subject, in a letter dated September 7, 1725, in which he says, "God fit you for your great work. Fast, watch, and pray; believe, love, endure, and be happy, towards which you shall never want the most ardent prayers of your affectionate father."

In preparing for his ordination, he found some scruples on his mind respecting the damnatory clause in the Athanasian Creed: which he proposed to his father, who afterwards gave him his opinion of it. Having prepared himself with the most conscientious care for the Ministerial Office, he was ordained Deacon on Sunday the 19th of September, 1725, and Priest, September 22, 1728, by Dr. Potter, then Bishop of Oxford.

Mr. Wesley's ordination supplied him with an additional motive to prosecute the study of divinity: which he did, by directing his inquiries into the evidences and reasonableness of the Christian religion. He wrote to his mother on this subject, November 3, who in her answer dated the 10th, encouraged him to persevere in such investigations, without any fear of being injured by them. "I highly approve," says she, "of your care to search into the grounds and reasons of our most holy religion; which you may do, if your intention be pure, and yet retain the integrity of your faith. Nay, the more you study on that subject, the more reason you will find to depend on the veracity of God; inasmuch as your perception of him will be clearer, and you will more plainly discover the congruity there is between the ordinances and precepts of the gospel, and right reason. Nor is it a hard matter to prove that the whole system of Christianity is founded thereon."

But Mr. Wesley did not confine himself to the study of divinity. His private Diary shews how diligent he was in the study of the Classics, and other books in different branches of Science, and in the performance of his academical exercises. And notwithstanding a warm opposition which some made against him, through his general good character for learning and diligence, he was elected Fellow of Lincoln-College, on Thursday, March 17, 1726. On this occasion, his mother, in her usual strain of piety, in a letter of the 30th of the same month, says, "I think myself bound to return thanks to Almighty God, for giving you good success at Lincoln. Let whoever be the instrument, to *him*, and *to him alone*, the glory appertains."

His parents now invited him to spend some time in

the

the country. Accordingly he left Oxford in April, and spent the whole summer at Epworth and Wroote, the living of which also his father possessed. During this time, he usually read prayers and preached twice on the Lord's Day, and other ways assisted his father, as occasion required. His time here was by no means wasted. He still pursued his studies, had frequent opportunities of conversing with his parents on subjects highly interesting and instructive, and kept a regular Diary of what passed. He often takes notice of the particular subjects discussed in their various conversations, and mentions the practical observations his parents made, and sometimes adds his own.

Mr. Wesley returned to Oxford on the 21st of September, and resumed his usual course of studies. His literary character was now established in the University; he was acknowledged by all parties to be a man of talents, and an excellent critic in the learned languages.

The high opinion that was entertained of him in these respects, was soon publicly expressed by their choosing him *Greek Lecturer* and *Moderator of the Classes*, on the 7th of November, 1726, though he had only been elected Fellow of the College in March, and was little more than twenty-three years of age.

Mr. Wesley was now more desirous than ever of improving his time to the best abvantage. But as he had not yet taken his degree of *Master of Arts*, the whole of his time was not at his own disposal. But such portions of it as were, he carefully spent in pursuit of such knowledge as promised to be beneficial to himself, and would enable him to benefit others;

never indulging himself in an idle, useless curiosity, which is the common fault of most young men in the conduct of their studies.

On the 14th of February, he proceeded Master of Arts, and acquired considerable reputation by his disputation for his Degree. On this occasion he wrote thus, to his mother: "One advantage at least, my Degree gives me, is, I am now at liberty, and shall be for some time, to choose my own employments. And as I believe, I know my own deficiencies best, and which of them are most necessary to be supplied, I hope my time will turn to better account, than when it was not so much at my own disposal."

He saw that a loose and desultory way of reading and studying, was not the way to accurate knowledge; and to avoid this error, as he had some time before fixed his plan, so now he began closely to pursue it. Certain hours in the morning and afternoon, of each day in the week, were appropriated to certain branches of knowledge, and he never suffered himself to deviate from the rules he had laid down. Thus, his hours of study on Mondays and Tuesdays, were devoted to the Greek and Roman Classics, Historians, and Poets.—Wednesdays, to Logic and Ethics.—Thursdays, to Hebrew and Arabic.—Fridays, to Metaphysics and Natural Philosophy.—Saturdays, to Oratory and Poetry, (chiefly composing.)—Sundays, to Divinity. In the intermediate hours, between these more fixed studies, he perfected himself in the French language, which he had begun to learn two or three years before. He also read a great variety of modern authors in almost every department of science. His method was this, he first read an author regularly through, then, in the second reading, transcribed into his Collections, such passages, as he thought important, either for the information they contained, or the beauty of expression. This method not only inured him to industry and accuracy, but it considerably increased his stock of knowledge, and gave him a familiar acquaintance with the authors he read.

It has been doubted by some persons, whether the Mathematics entered into Mr. Wesley's plan of studies at the University. But among the authors, mentioned in his Diary, we find *Euclid*, *Keil*, *S. Gravesande*, *Sir Isaac Newton*, &c. &c. and he seems to have studied them with great attention. He sometimes amused himself with experiments in Optics.

The progress, which he made in these various branches of literature, was equal to his diligence. His compositions were distinguished by an elegant simplicity of style, and justness of thought, that strongly marked the excellence of his classical taste. He conversed fluently in Latin, and both spoke and wrote it with remarkable purity and elegance. Those who were judges of the classic writers, and were frequently in his company, were surprised at the readiness, with which he quoted the Greek and Latin poets, even to his latest days. The Greek Testament was as familiar to him as the English. His skill in Logic is so well known, that it is almost proverbial. It has been said indeed, that "he delighted to puzzle his opponents, by the falacies of that art." But he has often declared, that he never in his life, in any disputation, either in jest or earnest, designedly took the wrong side of the question; and lest he should be brought insensibly to this, he always avoided being opponent in the public disputations at the University. His own words in answer to Mr. Badcock, are as follows : " It has been my first care for many years, to see that my cause was good ; and never, either in jest or earnest, to defend the wrong side of a question. And shame on me, if I cannot defend the right, after so much practice ; and after having been so early accustomed to separate truth from falsehood, how artfully soever they were twisted together."

His poetic abilities were not inconsiderable, but he did not cultivate them after he left the University. He looked upon himself as called to higher work, and he was soon so fully employed therein, that he was obliged wholly to give up the writing of poetry. Nevertheless, the pieces he has published, abundantly prove the strength and elegance of his genius in this respect. I refer the reader to his " Paraphrase on the 104th Psalm," and his " Hymn on the Attributes of God," which is one of the most excellent of the kind in our language, as specimens. Soon after this, he became a Tutor in the College, aud presided in the Hall as Moderator in the disputations held six times a week. As Tutor, he was singularly diligent and careful of his pupils, considering himself as responsible for them, not only to their parents, and the community, but to God ; and therefore he laboured to make them both scholars and christians. As Moderator in the disputations, he acquired a facility and expertness in arguing, especially in discerning and pointing out, well covered and plausible fallacies, which afterwards gave him great superiority over most of his numerous opponents.

It appears, however, that amidst all this, his chief study was religion, and his principal care to attain a more practical knowledge of God, and a greater conformity to his *will*, in the temper of his mind, and in all his actions. But concerning the way of attaining this, he was not yet properly informed; nor was he convinced, that his own endeavours were insufficient for this purpose. He saw indeed, in 1725, what the Gospel was intended to do for him and all mankind, that it was to be the means of reconciling him to God, and giving him a title to the heavenly inheritance; of cleansing him from sin, and preparing him for the enjoyment of heaven; and he retained this view, of the general design of the gospel, from that period to the end of his life, without the least variation. But he did not yet understand the method proposed in the gospel, of putting a sinner in possession of these blessings, nor the order in which we are capable of acquiring them. What chiefly kept his mind in this state of perplexity, was a confused notion, which he had imbibed, of justification. This he either confounded with sanctification, or thought a man must be sanctified before he is justified. This notion prevented his perceiving, that to justify, in the language of St. Paul, is to pardon a believing sinner, as an act of grace; not for the sake of any previous holiness in him, but thro' Jesus Christ alone, and that the way of faith is the way of victory, of holiness and peace. As soon as he was convinced of this, he was no longer embarrassed and perplexed; he saw immediately the plan which the gospel proposes of reconciling sinners to God, of making them holy in heart and life, and of giving them an hope full of immortality.

But let us attend him in this important pursuit, and every step we take will convince us, of the uprightness of his intention, and of his great zeal for God and religion.

In the year 1729, he tells us, he began not only to read, but to study the Bible, as the one, the only standard of truth, and the only model of pure religion. Hence he saw, in a clearer and clearer light, what the law of God required him to be, and the indispensable necessity of having the *mind which was in Christ*, and of *walking as Christ also walked*, and that not only in many or in most respects, but in all things. And this was the light wherein, at this time, he generally considered religion, as a uniform following of Christ, an entire inward and outward conformity to our Master. Nor was he afraid of any thing more than of bending this rule to the experience of himself, or of any other man,—of allowing himself in any, the least, disconformity to our grand exemplar.

It was about this time, that a serious man, whom he had travelled many miles to see, said to him, "Sir, you wish to serve God, and go to heaven. Remember you cannot serve him alone. You must, therefore, find companions, or make them. The Bible knows nothing of *solitary religion*." He never forgot this. Therefore, on his return to the University, in November, 1729, at which time he began to reside there altogether, he spoke to his brother Charles, who was Student of Christ-Church, to Mr. Morgan, Commoner of Christ-Church, and to Mr. Kirkham, of Merton-College, on the subject, and they agreed to spend three or four evenings in a week together. Their design was to read over the Classics, which they had before read in private, and chiefly the Greek Testament, on common nights, and on Sundays some book of divinity. The next year, two or three of Mr. Wesley's pupils desired the liberty of meeting with them, and afterwards one of Mr. Charles Wesley's pupils.

In the summer of this year Mr. Morgan informed Mr. Wesley, that he had called at the gaol to see a man who was condemned for killing his wife, and that, from the talk he had with one of the debtors, he verily believed it would do much good if any one would be at the pains of, now and then, speaking with them. This he so frequently repeated, that on the 24th of August, Mr. Wesley, and his brother, walked with him to the Castle. They were so well satisfied with their visit there, that they agreed to go thither once or twice a week, which they had not done long, before Mr. Morgan desired Mr. Wesley to go with him to see a poor woman in the town that was sick. In this employment too, when they came to reflect upon it, they believed it would be worth while to spend an hour or two in a week, provided the Minister of the parish, in which any such person was, were not against it. But that they might not depend on their own judgment, Mr. Wesley wrote an account to his father of their whole design, withal begging that he, who had lived seventy years in the world, and seen as much of it as most private men had ever done, would advise them whether they had yet gone too far, and whether they should now stand still or go forward?

Part of his Answer, dated Sept. 21, 1730, was this:

"And now, as to your designs and employments, what can I say less of them than—*Valde probo** : and that I have the highest reason to bless God, that he has given me two sons together at Oxford, to whom he has given grace and courage to turn the war against the world and the devil, which is the best way to conquer them. They have but one more enemy to combat with, the flesh ; which if they take care to subdue by fasting and prayer, there will be no more for them to do, but to proceed steadily in the same course, and expect the crown which fadeth not away. You have reason to bless God, as I do, that you have so fast a friend as Mr. M. who, I see, in the most difficult service, is ready to break the ice for you. You do not know of how much good that poor wretch, who killed his wife, has been the providential occasion. I think I must adopt Mr. M— to be my son, together with you and your brother Charles : and when I have such a ternion to prosecute that war, wherein I am now *Miles emeritus* †, I shall not be ashamed, when they speak with their enemies in the gate.

" I am afraid lest the main objection you make, against your going on in the business with the prisoners, may secretly proceed from flesh and blood. For ' who can harm you if you are followers of that which is so good ?' And which will be one of the marks by which the Shepherd of Israel will know his sheep at the last day ?—Though, if it were possible for you to suffer a little in the cause, you would have a confessor's reward. You own, none, but such as are out of their senses, would be prejudiced against your acting in this manner. Go on then, in God's name, in the path to which your Saviour has directed you, and that track wherein your father has gone before you! For when I was an under-graduate at Oxford, I visited those in the Castle there, and reflect on it with great satisfaction to this day. Walk as prudently as you can, tho' not fearfully, and my heart and prayers are with you.

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* I greatly approve.

† A worn out soldier.

"Your first regular step is to consult with him, (if any such there be,) who has a jurisdiction over the prisoners; and the next is, to obtain the direction and approbation of your Bishop. This is Monday morning, at which time I shall never forget you. If it be possible, I should be glad to see you all three here in the end of the summer. But if I cannot have that satisfaction, I am sure I can reach you every day, though you were beyond the Indies. Accordingly to Him, who is every where, I now heartily commit you, as being,

"Your most affectionate and joyful Father."

In pursuance of these directions, he immediately went to Mr. Gerard, the Bishop of Oxford's Chaplain, who was likewise the person that took care of the prisoners, when any were condemned to die, (at other times they were left to their own care,) and proposed to him their design of serving them as far as they could, and his own intention to preach there once a month, if the Bishop approved of it. He much commended their design, and said,—he would answer for the Bishop's approbation, to whom he would take the first opportunity of mentioning it. It was not long before he informed Mr. Wesley, he had done so, and that his Lordship not only gave his permission, but was greatly pleased with the undertaking, and hoped it would have the desired success.

Soon after, a gentleman of Merton College, who was one of their little company, which now consisted of five persons, acquainted them, that he had been much rallied the day before, for being a member of the *Holy Club;* and that it was become a common topic of mirth at his college, where they had found out several of their customs, to which they were themselves utter strangers. Upon this Mr. Wesley consulted his father again, in whose answer were these words:

"December 1.

"This day I received both yours, and this evening in our course of reading, I thought I found an answer that would be more proper than any I myself could dictate; though, since it will not be easily translated, I send it in the Original, 2 Cor. vii. 4, *Πολλη μοι Καυχησις υπερ υμων· πεπληρωμαι τη παρακλησει· υπερπερισσευομαι τη χαρα.** What would you be? Would you be angels? I question whether a mortal can arrive at a greater degree of perfection, than steadily to do good, and for that reason patiently and meekly to suffer evil. For my part, on the present view of your actions and designs, my daily prayers are, that God would keep you humble; and then I am sure, that if you continue *to suffer for righteousness' sake*, tho' it be but in a lower degree, *the Spirit of* God, *and of glory* shall, in some good measure, *rest upon you.* Be never weary of well-doing: never look back; for you know the prize and the crown are before you. Tho' I can scarce think so meanly of you, as that you would be discouraged with "the crackling of thorns under a pot." Be not highminded, but fear; preserve an equal temper of mind under whatever treatment you meet with, from a not very just or well-natured world. Bear no more sail than is necessary, but steer steady. The less you value yourselves for these unfashionable duties, (as there is no such thing as works of supererogation,) the more all good and wise men will value you, if they see your actions are of a piece; or, which is infinitely more, He by whom actions and intentions are weighed, will both accept, esteem, and reward you.

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* Great is my glorying of you. I am filled with comfort. I am exceeding joyful.

"I hear my son *John* has the honour of being styled the *Father of the holy Club*: if it be so, I am sure I must be the Grand-father of it: and I need not say, that I had rather any of my sons were so dignified and distinguished, than to have the title of HIS HOLINESS."

In the same letter, he advises them to use great mildness towards their persecutors; but at the same time, to avoid a mean or sneaking behaviour, and rather to shew an open and manly firmness, which is highly becoming, in a mind conscious of acting well.

In answer to this, Mr. Wesley wrote to his father, December 11. He says, "We all return you our sincere thanks for your timely and necessary advice; and should be glad if it were as easy to follow it, as it is impossible not to approve it. That doubtless is the very point we have to gain, before any other can be managed successfully, to have an habitual, lively sense of our being only instruments in his hand, who can do all things either with or without any instrument. But how to fix this sense in us, is the great question. We hope you and all our friends will continue to intercede for us, to him with whom all things are possible.

"To-morrow night I expect to be in company with the gentleman, who did us the honour to take the first notice of our little society. I have terrible reasons to think he is as slenderly provided with humanity, as with sense and learning. However, I must not slip this opportunity, because he is at present in some distress, occasioned by his being obliged to dispute in the schools on Monday, though he is not furnished with such arguments as he wants. I intend, if he has not procured them before, to help him to some arguments, that I may at least remove that prejudice from him,—that we are friends to none, but those who are as queer as ourselves."

Under the encouragement of his father's letter, they still continued to meet together as usual, and to confirm one another in their pious resolutions. They communicated once a week. They visited the prisoners, and some poor families in the town, when they were sick. And that they might have wherewith to relieve their distress, they abridged themselves of all superfluities, and of many of the conveniences of life. They took every opportunity of conversing with their acquaintance in the most useful manner, to awaken in them a sense of religion. But the outcry daily increasing, that they might shew what ground there was for it, they proposed to their friends, or opponents, as they had opportunity, these or the like questions:

I. Whether it does not concern all men, of all conditions, to imitate Him, as much as they can, "who went about doing good?"

Whether all christians are not concerned in that command; "While we have time let us do good to all men?"

Whether we shall not be more happy hereafter, the more good we do now?

Whether we can be happy at all hereafter unless we have, according to our power, "Fed the hungry, clothed the naked, visited those that are sick and in prison," and made all these actions subservient to a higher purpose, even the saving of souls from death?

Whether it be not our bounden duty always to remember, that he did more for us, than we can do for him, who assures us, "In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me?"

II. Whether, upon these considerations, we may not try to do good to our acquaintance? Particularly, whether we may not try to convince them of the necessity of being christians?

Whether of the consequent necessity of being Scholars?

Whether of the necessity of method and industry in order to either learning or virtue?

Whether we may not try to persuade them to confirm and increase their industry, by communicating as often as they can?

Whether we may not mention to them the authors whom we conceive to have written best on those subjects?

Whether we may not assist them as we are able, from time to time, to form resolutions upon what they read in those authors, and to execute them with steadiness and perseverance?

III. Whether, upon the considerations above-mentioned we may not try to do good to those that are hungry, naked, or sick? In particular, whether, if we know any necessitous family, we may not give them a little food, clothes, or physic, as they want?

Whether we may not give them, if they can read, a Bible, Common-Prayer Book, or Whole Duty of Man?

Whether we may not now and then inquire how they have used them; explain what they do not understand, and enforce what they do?

Whether we may not enforce upon them, more especially, the necessity of private prayer, and of frequenting the church and the sacrament?

Whether we may not contribute what little we are able toward having their children clothed and taught to read?

Whether we may not take care that they may be taught their catechism, and short prayers for morning and evening?

IV. Lastly, Whether, upon the considerations above-mentioned, we may not try to do good to those that are in prison? In particular, Whether we may not release such well-disposed persons as remain in prison for small sums?

Whether we may not lend smaller sums to those that are of any trade, that they may procure themselves tools and materials to work with?

Whether we may not give to them, who appear to want it most, a little money, or clothes, or physic?

Whether we may not supply as many as are serious enough to read, with a Bible, and Whole Duty of Man?

Whether we may not, as we have opportunity, explain and enforce these upon them, especially with respect to public and private prayer, and the blessed sacrament?

They met with no person who answered any of these questions in the negative, or who even doubted, whether it were not lawful to apply to this use that time and money, which, otherwise, they would have spent in common diversions. But several they met with who increased their little stock of money for the prisoners and the poor, by subscribing something quarterly to it; so that the more persons they proposed their designs to, the more were they confirmed in the belief of their innocency, and the more determined to pursue them in spite of the ridicule, which increased fast upon them during the winter. However, in the spring, Mr. Wesley thought it would not be improper to desire farther instructions from those, who were wiser and better than themselves; and accordingly, (on May 18, 1731,) he wrote a particular account of all their proceedings to a clergyman of known wisdom and integrity.

Part of the Answer he received was as follows:

"Good Sir,

"I cannot but heartily approve of that serious and religious turn of mind that prompts you and your associates to those pious and charitable offices; and can have no notion of that man's religion or concern for the honour of the University, that opposes you, as far as your design respects the Colleges. I should be loth to send a son of mine to any Seminary, where his conversing with virtuous young men, whose profest design of meeting together, at proper times, was to assist each other in forming good resolutions, and encourage one another to execute them with constancy and steadiness, was inconsistent with any received maxims or rules of life among the members."

It appears from the questions, above proposed which relate to the students, that Mr. Wesley was not inattentive to their progress in learning, tho' he endeavoured to make them religious. His regular method of study, his diligence and care to make his pupils thoroughly understand every thing they read, were admirably adapted to make them scholars. It is, indeed, universally allowed, that he was an excellent Tutor, and his pupils have in general acknowledged themselves under infinite obligations to him on this account.

This year Mr. Wesley, and his brother Charles, began the practice of conversing together in Latin, whenever they were alone: chiefly with a view of acquiring a facility in expressing themselves in this language, on all occasions, with perspicuity, energy, and elegance. This practice they continued for near sixty years, and with such success, that if their style did not equal, it certainly, on some subjects, approached nearer to the best models of conversation in the Augustine age, than many of the learned have thought it possible to attain.

In the April following, they became acquainted with Mr. Clayton, of Brazen-Nose College, who, upon being informed of their proceedings, immediately and heartily joined with them, and by his advice, to the two particulars they had observed before, viz. the endeavouring to do what good they could, and communicating as often as they had opportunity, they now added a third, the observing the fasts of the Church, the general neglect of which, they could not apprehend to be, by any means, a sufficient excuse, for their neglecting them.

This encreasing strictness in their way of living, constancy in the use of all the means of grace, and readiness to every good work, drew down upon them still greater ridicule from the Gentlemen of the University. Their common appellation now was, the *Sacramentarians*, the *Godly Club*, and, by and by, they were termed *Methodists*. This last title was given them, in the first instance, by a Fellow of Merton College, in allusion to an ancient College of Physicians at Rome, who were remarkable for putting their patients under regimen, and were therefore termed *Methodists*. Thus, when their opposers could derive no advantage either from scripture or reason, they endeavoured to gain their point by giving them names. But most of those, who thus ridiculed them, being persons of well-known characters, they had not the good fortune to gain any Proselytes, from the Sacrament, until a Gentleman, eminent for learning, and well esteemed for piety, joining them, told his nephew, "That if he dared to go to the weekly communion any longer, he would immediately turn him out of doors." This argument had no success; the young Gentleman communicated next week. The uncle became more violent, and shook his nephew by the throat, to convince him more effectually that receiving the sacrament every week, was founded in error; but this argument appearing to the young Gentleman to have no weight in it, he continued his usual practice. This eminent person, so well esteemed for piety, was however, indefatigable in his endeavours to suppress it. He now changed the mode of his attack, and by a soft and obliging manner towards him, he melted down his nephew's resolution of being so strictly religious, and from this time, he began to absent himself, five Sundays out of six, from the sacrament. This success much delighted their gay opponents, who increased their number apace, especially when, shortly after, one of the Seniors of the College, having consulted with the Doctor, upon his return from him, sent for two young Gentlemen severally, who had communicated weekly for some time; and was so successful in his exhortations, that, for the future, they promised to do it only three times a year. About this time, there was a meeting of several of the Officers and Seniors of the College, wherein it was consulted what would be the speediest way to stop the progress of enthusiasm in it; for so they termed that small degree of external piety and virtue, (for it was yet little more,) which these few serious young men, just awaking out of sleep, had begun to practice.

But none of these things moved them. They were resolved to persevere, which they were encouraged to do by other letters, as well as those above recited, and particularly by one from Mr. Wesley's eldest brother, Samuel. Being informed of their proceedings, and of the reproach cast upon them, he wrote as follows:—" I think you are now in that state, wherein he that is not for you is against you. I do not know how often you meet together, yet I would rather straiten than slacken the string now, if it might be done without breaking. I cannot say, I thought you always, in every thing, right; but I must now say, rather than you and Charles should give over your whole course, especially what relates to the prisoners in the Castle, I would choose to follow either of you, nay, both of you, to your graves. I cannot advise you better than in the words I proposed for a Motto to a Pamphlet. *Στηθ' εδραιος ως ακμων τυπτομενος καλου γαρ αθλητου δερεσθαι και νικαν·* Stand thou steadfast, as a beaten anvil to the stroke, for it is the part of a good champion to be flayed alive, and to conquer." Yet this good man, shortly after this, seems to have too readily received some unfavourable reports concerning his brothers, and their friends at Oxford, which occasioned the following letter from Mr. John Wesley :

"Lincoln College, Nov. 17, 1731.

"Dear Brother,

"Considering the changes that I remember in myself, I shall not at all wonder, if the time come, when we differ as little in our conclusion, as we do in our premises. In most we seem to agree already, especially as to early rising, and not keeping much company. But these are the very things, about which, others will never agree with us. Had I given up these, or but one of them, rising early, which implies going to bed early, and keeping little company, not one man in ten of those, who are offended at me, would ever open their mouths against any of the other particulars. For the sake of these, those are mentioned. The root of the matter lies here. Would I but employ a third of my money, and about half of my time, as other folks do, smaller matters would be easily overlooked. But I think, '*Nil tanti est.*'* I have often thought of a saying of Dr. Hayward, when he examined me for Priest's Orders :—' Do you know what you are about? You are bidding defiance

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*Nothing is of so much importance.

fiance to all mankind. He that would live as a Christian Priest, ought to know that, whether his hand be against every man or not, he must expect every man's hand should be against him.' It is not strange that every man's hand, who is not a Christian, should be against him, who endeavours to be such. But is it not hard, that even those that are *with us* should be *against us*: that a man's enemies (in some degree) should be those of the household of faith? Yet so it is. From the time that a man sets himself to his business, very many, even of those who travel the same road, will lay *stumbling blocks* in his way. One blames him, for not going fast enough, or for having made no greater progress; another, for going too far, which, perhaps, strange as it is, is the more common charge of the two.

"This being a point of no common concern, I desire to explain myself upon it, once for all, and to tell you freely and clearly, those general positions, on which I ground all those practices for which I am generally accused of singularity. 1st. As to the end of my *being*, I lay it down for a rule, that I cannot be *too happy*, or therefore *too holy*, and thence infer that the more steadily I keep my eye upon *the prize of our high calling*, the better, and the more of my thoughts, and words, and actions, are directly pointed at the attainment of it. 2dly, As to the instituted means of attaining it, I likewise lay it down for a rule, that I am to use them every time I may. 3dly, As to prudential means, I believe this rule holds, of things indifferent in themselves: Whatever I know to do me hurt, that to me is not indifferent, but resolutely to be abstained from; whatever

I know to do me good, that to me also is not indifferent, but resolutely to be embraced.

" But it will be said, ' I am whimsical.' True: And what then? If by *whimsical*, be meant simply singular, I own it; if singular without any reason, I deny it with both my hands, and am ready to give an answer to any that ask me, of every custom wherein I wilfully differ from the world. I grant in many single actions, I differ unreasonably from others, but not wilfully; no, I should extremely thank any one, who would teach me to help it. But can I totally help it, till I have more breeding, or more prudence, to neither of which I am much disposed naturally? And I greatly fear my acquired stock of either, will give me small assistance.

" I have but one thing more to add, and that is, to my being *formal*. If by that be meant, that I am not easy, and unaffected enough in my carriage; it is very true; but how shall I help it? I cannot be genteely behaved by instinct; and if I am to try after it, by the experience and observation of others, that is not the work of a month, but of years. If by *formal*, be meant, that I am *serious*, this too is very true; but why should I help it? Mirth, I grant, is fit for you; but it does not follow, that it is fit for me. Are the same tempers any more than the same words and actions, fit for all circumstances? If you are to ' rejoice evermore,' because you have put your enemies to flight, am I to do the same while they continually assault me? You are glad because you have *passed from death to life*;—well: but let him be afraid, who knows not whether he is *to live or die*. Whether this be my condition, or not, who can tell better than myself? Him, who can, whoever he be, I allow to be a proper judge, whether I do well to be generally as serious as I can.

"I am, dear Brother, your's, and my Sister's
"Affectionate Brother,
"JOHN WESLEY."

The members of this little association had now attained a good degree of firmness and courage. "In our resolution," says Mr. Wesley, in a letter dated October 18, 1730, "to adhere to all things which we are convinced God requires at our hand, we trust we shall persevere, till He calls us to give an account of our stewardship. As to the names of *Methodists*, *Supererogation-men*, and so on, with which some of our neighbours are pleased to compliment us, we do not conceive ourselves to be under any obligation to regard them; much less to take them for arguments. To the Law and to the Testimony we appeal, whereby we ought to be judged. If by these it can be proved, we are in an error, we will immediately and gladly retract it; if not, we have not *so learned Christ*, as to renounce any part of his service, though *men should say all manner of evil against us*, with more judgment, and as little truth, as hitherto. We do indeed use all the lawful means we know, to prevent the good which is in us, from being evil spoken of; but if the neglect of known duties, be the one condition of securing our reputation, why, fare it well. We know whom we have believed, and what we thus lay out, he will pay us again."

Accordingly they proceeded on in the same tract of cheerfully doing well, and patiently suffering ill, all the time they continued at Oxford. And, notwithstanding the reproach and opposition they met with, their little society increased more and more in number as well as in grace. In 1732, Mr. Ingham, of Queen's College, and Mr. Broughton, of Exeter, with two or three of Mr. Clayton's pupils, were added to their number. About the same time Mr. James Hervey began to meet with them, and in 1735, Mr. Whitefield.

These were all closely united in brotherly love. They read the Greek Testament together, and conversed freely and deeply on divine things, and, in every way in their power, strengthened each other's hands in God. They were all zealous members of the Church of England, not only tenacious of all her doctrines, so far as they knew them, but of all her discipline to the minutest circumstance. They were likewise zealous observers of all the University-Statutes, and that for conscience' sake. But they observed neither these nor any thing else, any farther than they conceived it was bound upon them by that one book, the *Bible;* it being their one desire and design to be downright *Bible-Christians*, taking the Bible, as interpreted by the primitive Church, and our own, for their sole rule.

The one charge then advanced against them was, *That they were righteous over-much; that they were abundantly too scrupulous, and too strict, carrying things to great extremes.* In particular, that they laid too much stress upon the Rubrics and Canons of the Church; that they insisted too much on observing the statutes of the University; and that they took the Scriptures in too strict and literal a sense, so that if they were right, few indeed would be saved.

During the latter part of Mr. Wesley's residence at Oxford, both he, and his brother Charles kept up a close intimacy with Mr. Law. Twice or thrice a year, they travelled about sixty miles on foot (that they might save the more money to give to the poor) in order to visit him: and his conversation was undoubtedly rendered very useful to them. One time Mr. Law observed to Mr. Wesley :—" You would have a philosophical Religion, but there can be no such thing. Religion is the most plain, simple thing in the world. It is only :—*We love him, because he first loved us*." This remark, as Mr. Wesley frequently observed, he never afterwards forgot. At another time, Mr. Law, perceiving him to be much dejected, inquired the reason. " Because," says he, " I see so little fruit of my labours." " My dear friend," replied Mr. Law, " You reverse matters from their proper order. You are to follow the divine light, wherever it leads you, in all your conduct. It is God alone that gives the blessing. I pray you always mind your own work, and go on with cheerfulness: and God, you may depend upon it, will take care of his. Besides, Sir, I perceive you would fain convert the world. But you must wait God's own time. Nay, if after all, he is only pleased to use you as a ' hewer of wood, and drawer of water,' you should submit: yea, you should be thankful to God, he has honoured you so far." This advice, also, Mr. Wesley repeatedly acknowledged, was rendered very profitable to him.

During the two last years, Mr. Wesley made frequent excursions to London, and different parts of the country, besides his journeys to Epworth, and the places he visited in his way thither and back, all of which he performed on foot. He observed in his Diary, that he had walked about 1050 miles; it is supposed he means within the year he is speaking of. In these excursions he constantly preached on the Lord's Day, if he had an opportunity; so that he might now be called, in some sort, an Itinerant Preacher, though on a plan very different from that, which he afterwards adopted, and of which he could not, at this time, have the most distant conception.

On the 1st of January, 1733, he preached at St. Mary's, Oxford, before the University, on the *Circumcision of the heart.* In this discourse, which is printed in the second volume of his Sermons, he has explained, with great clearness and energy of language, his views of the Christian salvation to be attained in this life, in which he never varied in any material point, to the day of his death. He was, indeed, at this time, almost wholly ignorant of the Gospel method of attaining this Salvation, but he sought it with his whole heart, according to the knowledge he then had; and was willing to sacrifice the dearest thing he had in the world, for the attainment of it.

On the 21st of September, the next year, (1734,) he began the practice of reading as he travelled on horseback; and this practice he continued near forty years, till his infirmities obliged him to travel in a carriage. His frequent journeys, often on foot, as well as on horseback, and the great and constant labour of preaching, reading, visiting, &c. wherever he was, with hard study, and a very abstemious diet, had now very much affected his health. His strength was greatly reduced, and he had frequent returns of spitting of blood. But he took the advice of a physician or two, and by the blessing of God on the means used, and a prudent management of his daily exercise,

ercise, he gradually lost his complaints and recovered his strength.

His father's health had been on the decline for several years, and he now seemed approaching towards the close of life. The old Gentleman, conscious of his situation, and desirous that the living of Epworth should remain in the family, wrote to his son John, requesting him to apply for the next Presentation. But he was determined not to accept of the living, if he could obtain it; and stated to his father at large, his reasons for refusing to comply with his request. The principal of these was, that he judged his situation as Tutor at Oxford, to be better calculated for usefulness, as well as more friendly to his progress in piety, than to have the care of a Country Parish. His father died in April, and the Living of Epworth was given away in May, so that he now considered himself as settled at Oxford, without any risk of being further molested in his quiet retreat. But a new scene of action was soon proposed to him, of which he had not before the least idea.

The Trustees of the new Colony of Georgia, were greatly in want of proper persons to send thither, to preach the Gospel, not only to the Colony, but to the Indians. They fixed their eyes on Mr. John Wesley, and some of his friends, as the most proper persons they could think of, on account of the regularity of their behaviour, their abstemious ways of living, and their readiness to endure hardships. At length, after much hesitation, Mr. Wesley consented to go to Georgia, where he saw a prospect of great usefulness, without any of the dangers to which he apprehended his piety would be exposed at Epworth.

And it is probable that the very difficulty of the undertaking, and the prospect of the hardships he must undergo, had some influence in disposing him to accept of the offer made him.

SECTION II.

OF MR. WESLEY'S MISSION TO AMERICA, AND OF HIS LABOURS AND SUFFERINGS THERE TILL HIS RETURN TO ENGLAND.

ALTHOUGH their retired situation at Oxford was perfectly agreeable to them, as they were studiously inclined, and much attached to literary pursuits; yet conceiving they might bring more glory to God, and be of greater service to mankind by preaching the Gospel to the new colony, and to the Indians, to whom they hoped to have access; the two Messrs. Wesleys, John and Charles, Mr. Ingham, and Mr. Delamotte, took boat at Gravesend, October 14, 1735, in order to embark for Georgia. Their end, as Mr. Wesley declares, in leaving their own native country, was not to avoid want, (God having given them plenty of temporal blessings,) nor to gain the *dung* and *dross* of *riches* and *honour;* but merely to save souls, their own, and those of others, and to live wholly to the glory of God. A day or two after they had embarked, viz. Friday the 17th, Mr. Wesley preached *extempore*, for the first time, the morning service being on the Quarter-deck. This day, also, he began to learn German, that he might converse with some members of the Moravian Church, who were on board, being much struck with their Christian deportment. This was a singular providence; as he received great light and edification from the conversation and behaviour of this pious people.

Their common way of living was this. From four in the morning till five, each of them used private prayer. From five to seven, they read the Bible together, carefully comparing it (that they might not learn to their own understandings) with the writings of the earliest ages. At seven, they breakfasted. At eight, were the public prayers. From nine to twelve, Mr. Wesley usually learned German, and Mr. Delamotte, Greek. His brother wrote Sermons, and Mr. Ingham instructed the children. At twelve, they met to give an account to one another what they had done since their last meeting, and what they designed to do before their next. About one, they dined. The time from dinner to four, they spent in reading to those of whom each of them had taken charge, or in speaking to them severally, as need required. At four, were the evening prayers; when either the second lesson was explained, (as it always was in the morning,) or the children were catechised, and instructed, before the congregation. From six to seven, Mr. Wesley read in his cabin to two or three of the passengers, (of whom there were about eighty English on board,) and each of his brethren to a few more in their's. At seven, he joined with the Germans in their public service; while Mr. Ingham was reading between the decks to as many as desired to hear. At eight, they met again, to exhort and instruct one anothert. Between nine and ten they went to bed, "where neither the roaring of the sea, nor the motion of the ship,"

ship," says Mr. Wesley, "could take away the refreshing sleep which God gave us."

This account is given as a specimen of Mr. Wesley's exactness in redeeming the time. Those who have not been intimately acquainted with him, will be surprised to hear what is, indeed, the truth, that it would be difficult to fix upon a single day in the fifty-three years, which followed, that was not divided with as great exactness. The employments might vary; but not the exact attention to the filling up of every hour.

That the time spent upon the passengers was not wholly lost, is also learned from several passages in his Journals. Many were deeply awakened: others were instructed in the first principles of the Christian Religion, who were before entirely ignorant thereof, and some were prevailed upon to attend the public ordinances of the Gospel, who had lived, for years, in a constant neglect of them, by the indefatigable labours of himself and his co-adjutors.

But though his eye was single; though his life was not only harmless, but exemplary; though he gave all his goods to feed the poor, and sacrificed ease and honour, and every other temporal gratification, that he might follow Christ; yet, it is certain, he was still very little acquainted with true, experimental religion. This the Lord began now to shew him, first by the fear of death, which, notwithstanding all his efforts, brought him into bondage, whenever danger was apparent. "At those times," he remarks, "I plainly felt I was unfit, because I was unwilling to die." But, secondly, the lively victorious faith, he evidently perceived in some of his fellow-passengers, still more convinced him, that he possessed not those privileges which the gospel of Christ holds out to mankind, to be received by faith.

Speaking of the Germans, he remarks, "I had long observed the great seriousness of their behaviour. Of their humility they had given a continual proof, by performing those servile offices for the other passengers, which none of the English would undertake; for which they desired, and would receive no pay, saying, 'It was good for their proud hearts,' and, 'Their loving Saviour had done more for them.' And every day had given them occasion of shewing a meekness which no injury could move. If they were pushed, struck, or thrown down, they rose again and went away; but no complaint was found in their mouth. There was now an opportunity of trying, whether they were delivered from the spirit of fear, as well as from that of pride, anger, and revenge. In the midst of the Psalm, wherewith their service began, the sea broke over, split the main sail in pieces, covered the ship, and poured in between the decks, as if the great deep had already swallowed us up. A terrible screaming began among the English. The Germans calmly sung on. I asked one of them afterwards, 'Were you not afraid?' He answered, 'I thank God, No.' I asked, 'But were not your women and children afraid?' He replied mildly, 'No; our women and children are not afraid to die.'"

Thus commenced his acquaintance with the Moravian Brethren, which he cultivated for several years with great assiduity and success, and it must be allowed that the knowledge of divine things, which he acquired by their means, laid the foundation of the great things which followed in the subsequent part of his life: Their spirit and conduct on this occasion made a very deep impression on his mind, and shewed him the power of living faith in a clearer light, than he had ever seen it before.

Thursday, February 5, they arrived in Savannah-River, in Georgia, and about eight the next morning landed on a small uninhabited island. General Oglethorpe led them to a rising ground, where they kneeled down to give thanks. He then took boat for Savannah. When the rest of the people came on shore, they also joined together in prayer. On this occasion, Mr. Wesley observes, that the second Lesson, Mark vi, seemed to him peculiarly suitable.

On February the 7th, the General returned with Mr. Spangenberg, one of the pastors of the Germans. The same piety, which Mr. Wesley had observed in those on board the ship, was also visible in this Gentleman. "I therefore," says he, "asked his advice, with regard to my own conduct. He said, 'My brother, I must first ask you one or two questions. Have you the witness in yourself? Does the Spirit of God bear witness with your spirit, that you are a child of God?' I was surprised, and knew not what to answer. He observed it, and asked, 'Do you know Jesus Christ?' I paused, and said, I know he is the Saviour of the world. 'True,' replied he, 'but do you know he has saved you?' I answered, I hope he has died to save me. He only added, 'Do you know *yourself?*' I said, 'I do;' but I fear, they were vain words."

On the 14th, some Indians came to them, and shook them by the hand, one of them saying, "I am glad you are come. When I was in England I desired that some would speak *the great Word* to me.

And my nation then desired to hear it. But now we are all in confusion. Yet I am glad you are come. I will go up and speak to the wise men of our nation. And I hope they will hear. But we would not be made Christians, as the Spaniards make Christians. We would be taught before we are baptized."

Mr. Wesley answered, "There is but One, He that sitteth in heaven, who is able to teach man wisdom. Though we are come so far, we know not whether he will please to teach you by us, or not. If he teach you, you will learn wisdom; but we can do nothing." They then withdrew.

The house, in which they were to reside, not being ready, they took up their lodging with the Germans. —"We had now," says Mr. Wesley, "an opportunity, day by day, of observing their whole behaviour. For we were in one room with them, from morning to night; unless for the little time I spent in walking. They were always employed, always cheerful themselves, and in good humour with one another. They had put away all anger and strife, and wrath and bitterness, and clamour, and evil speaking. They walked worthy of the vocation, wherewith they were called, and adorned the Gospel of our Lord in all things."

He proceeds, "Saturday, Feb. 28. They met to consult concerning the affairs of their Church. Mr. Spangenberg, being shortly to go to Pennsylvania, and Bishop Nitschman to return to Germany.—After several hours spent in conference and prayer, they proceeded to the election and ordination of a Bishop. The great simplicity, as well as solemnity of the whole, almost made me forget the seventeen hundred years between, and imagine myself in one of those assemblies, where form and state were not; but Paul, the tent-maker, or Peter, the fisherman, presided: yet with the demonstration of the Spirit and of power."

On the Thursday preceding, Mr. Wesley and his brother had gone to pay their first visit to the Indians, and on March the 7th, he entered upon his Ministry at Savannah, by preaching on the Epistle for the day, being the xii. chap. of the first Epistle to the Corinthians. In the second Lesson, Luke xviii. was our Lord's prediction of the treatment which he himself, and consequently his followers, were to meet with from the world; and his gracious promise to those who are content, *Nudi nudum Christum sequi:* "Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or friends, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come everlasting life."

"Yet notwithstanding these plain declarations of our Lord," says he, "notwithstanding my own repeated experience, notwithstanding the experience of all the sincere followers of Christ, whom I have ever talked with, read or heard of; nay, and the reason of the thing, evincing to a demonstration, That all who love not the light, must hate him who is continually labouring to pour it in upon them: I do here bear witness against myself, that when I saw the number of people crowding into the church, the deep attention with which they received the word, and the seriousness that afterwards sat on all their faces; I could scarce refrain from giving the lie, to experience, and reason, and Scripture all together. I could hardly believe that the greater, the far greater part of this attentive, and serious people, would hereafter trample under foot that word, and say all manner of evil falsely of him that spake it. O, who can believe, what their heart abhors? Jesus, Master, have mercy on us! Let us love thy cross! Then shall we believe, 'If we suffer with thee, we shall also reign with thee!'"

But he did not confine his Ministry to Savannah. He gave Frederica also a portion of his labours. In going thither, he was in imminent danger of being drowned. His own account of it presents us with a striking picture of his presence of mind.

"Sunday, April 4, About four in the afternoon, I set out for Frederica, in a Pettiawga, (a sort of flat-bottomed barge.) The next evening we anchored near Skidoway Island, where the water at flood was twelve or fourteen feet deep. I wrapt myself up from head to foot, in a large cloak, to keep off the sand-flies, and lay down on the quarter-deck. Between one and two I waked under water, being so fast asleep that I did not find where I was, till my mouth was full of it. Having left my cloak, I know not how, upon deck, I swam round to the other side of the Pettiawga, where a boat was tied, and climbed up the rope, without any hurt, more than wetting my clothes. 'Thou art the God of whom cometh salvation: Thou art the Lord by whom we escape death.'"

Not finding any open door for the prosecution of the grand design, which induced him to visit America, the conversion of the Indians, he, and his two companions considered, in what manner they might be most useful to the little flock at Savannah. And they agreed, first, to advise the most serious among them to form themselves into a sort of little society, and to meet once or twice a week, in order to improve, instruct, and exhort one another. Secondly, To select out of these, a smaller number, for a more intimate union with each other, which might be forwarded, partly by him and his friends conversing singly with each, and partly by inviting them all together to their house: and this accordingly they determined to do every Sunday afternoon.—Here we see the first rudiments of Classes and Bands, which have had no small influence in promoting the success of the Methodists, beyond any other denomination of Christians, not immediately favoured by the civil power.

Sunday 9. He began dividing the public prayers, according to the original appointment of the Church, (then still observed in a few places in England). The morning service began at five. The communion office, with the sermon, at eleven. The evening service about three. And this day, for the first time, he read prayers in the Court-house.

The next day he began visiting his parishioners from house to house; for which he set apart the time when they could not work, viz. from twelve till three in the afternoon. He and his fellow-labourers used the utmost diligence also in instructing the youth. Their general method was this. Mr. Delamotte taught between thirty and forty children to read, write, and cast accounts. Before school in the mornings, and after school in the afternoon, he catechised the lowest class, and endeavoured to fix something of what was said in their understandings, as well as in their memories. In the evening he instructed the larger children. On Saturday, in the afternoon, Mr. Wesley catechised them all. The same he did on

Sunday, before the evening service. And in the Church, immediately after the second Lesson, a select number of them, having repeated the Catechism, and being examined in some part of it, he endeavoured to explain at large, and to enforce that part, both on them and the congregation.

Some time after the evening service, as many of the parishioners as desired it, met at Mr. Wesley's house, (as they did also on Wednesday evening,) and spent about an hour in prayer, singing, and mutual exhortation. A smaller number (mostly those who designed to communicate the next day) met there on Saturday evening; and a few of these came to him on the other evenings, and passed half an hour in the same employment.

His brother having left Frederica, in consequence of the violent opposition he met with there, Mr. Wesley again set out for that place. He arrived there on the 23d, but not without some danger, the boat in which they were, being on the point of sinking every moment in Doboy Sound, through the high wind, and the roughness of the sea. Here his labours were as great as at Savannah. He pursued the same plan of private and public instruction which he had followed there, and also used his utmost endeavours to suppress vice of every kind, especially Sabbath-breaking; in which he was assisted, in some degree, by Mr. Oglethorpe. "Saturday 19," says he, "Mr. Oglethorpe returned from the South, and gave orders on Sunday the 20th, that none should profane the day (as was usual before,) by fishing or fowling upon it. In the afternoon I summed up what I had seen or heard at Frederica, inconsistent with Christianity, and consequently with the prosperity of the place. The effect was, as it ought: some of the hearers were profited, and the rest deeply offended."

On the 30th, being returned to Savannah, he hoped a door was opened for going up immediately to the Choctaws, the least polished, i. e. the least *corrupted* of all the Indian nations. But, on his informing the General of his design, he objected, not only the danger of being intercepted, or killed by the French there; but, much more, the inexpediency of leaving Savannah destitute of a Minister. These objections he related to his friends in the evening, who were all of opinion, That he ought not yet to go.

Thursday, July 1. The Indians had an audience, and another on Saturday, when Chicali, their head man, dined with Mr. Oglethorpe. "After dinner," says Mr. Wesley, "I asked the grey-headed old man, What he thought he was made for? He said, 'He that is above knows what he made us for. We know nothing. We are in the dark. But white men know much. And yet white men build great houses, as if they were to live for ever. But white men cannot live for ever. In a little time, white men will be dust as well as I.' I told him, If red men will learn the good Book, they may know as much as white men. But neither we nor you can understand that Book, unless we are taught by him that is above: and he will not teach, unless you avoid what you already know is not good. He answered, 'I believe that: he will not teach us, while our hearts are not white. And our men do what they know is not good. They kill their own children. And our women do what they know is not good.

They kill the child before it is born. Therefore, He that is above does not send us the good Book.' "

The hardships of all kinds, which Mr. Wesley endured, while in America, were equal to his labours. Three hundred acres having been set apart at Savannah, for Glebe-land, he took from it what he thought sufficient for a good garden, and here he frequently wrought with his hands. He continued his custom of eating little, sleeping less, and of leaving not a moment of his time unemployed. He exposed himself, with the utmost indifference, to every change of season, and to all kinds of weather; to heat or cold, wet or dry, snow or hail, storm or tempest. He frequently slept on the ground in the summer, under the heavy dews of the night; and in the winter, with his hair and clothes frozen to the earth before the morning. He would wade through swamps, and swim over rivers in his clothes, and then travel on till they were dry: and what is most remarkable, did all this, without any apparent injury to his health. Nay, and, on one of these occasions, he seems to conclude that any person might undergo the same hardships, without being injured thereby, if his constitution were not impaired by an effeminate way of living. But in this point, I believe, few of my readers will be of his mind. They will rather impute his ability to endure such hardships, partly to his "iron body," as his brother Samuel termed it, and more especially to the superintending care of that Being, who *numbers the hairs of our heads*, and whose providence, in a particular manner, watches over those whose aim it is to *walk worthy of him unto all pleasing.*

The reader will not think me tedious, if I confirm and illustrate the account just given, by producing a few instances of the hardships he underwent.

"Tuesday, August 27, (1736)," says he, "I set out for Frederica. In walking to Thunderbolt, I was in so heavy a shower, that all my clothes were as wet as if I had gone through the river. On which occasion I cannot but observe that vulgar error, concerning the hurtfulness of the rains and dews of America. I have been thoroughly wet with these rains more than once; yet without any harm at all. And I have lain many nights in the open air, and received all the dews that fell. And so I believe might any one, if his constitution was not impaired by the softness of a genteel education."

August, Saturday 28. He says, "Our guide not being perfect in the way, we were soon lost in the woods. We walked on, however, as well as we could, till between nine and ten; when being heartily tired, and thoroughly wet with dew, we lay down and slept till morning.—By this good providence I was delivered from another fear, that of lying in the woods, which experience shewed was to one in tolerable health, a *mere Lion in the way.*"

"Wed. Dec. 23. Mr. Delamotte and I, with a guide, set out to walk to the Cowpen; when we had walked two or three hours, our guide told us plainly 'He did not know where we were.' However, beliving it could not be far off, we thought it best to go on. In an hour or two, we came to a cypress-swamp, which lay directly across our way: there was not time to walk back to Savannah before night; so we walked through it, the water being about breast-high. By the time we had gone a mile beyond it, we were out of all path; and it being now past sun-set, we sat down, intending to make a fire, and to stay there till morning; but finding our tinder wet, I advised to walk on still; but my companions, being faint and weary, were for lying down, which we accordingly did about six o'clock: the ground was as wet as our clothes, which, (it being a sharp frost,) were soon frozen together; however, I slept till six in the morning. There fell a heavy dew in the night, which covered us over as white as snow. Within an hour after sun-rise, we came to a plantation, and in the evening, without any hurt, to Savannah.

"Tuesday 28. We set out by land with a better guide for Frederica. On Wednesday evening, we came to Fort Argyle, on the back of the river Ogeechy. The next afternoon we crossed Cooanochy river in a small canoe, our horses swimming by the side of it. We made a fire on the bank, and, notwithstanding the rain, slept quietly till the morning.

"Saturday, January 1, 1737. Our provisions fell short, our journey being longer than we expected; but having a little barbecued Bears-flesh, (i. e. dried in the sun,) we boiled it, and found it wholesome food. The next day we reached Darien, the Settlement of the Scotch Highlanders, a sober, industrious, friendly, hospitable people; and on Wednesday 5, came to Frederica."

Let us observe now what the emolument was which he received, for his astonishing labours, and the various sufferings, to which he exposed himself. It appears, from his account of the last year's expense, viz. from March 1, 1736, to March 1737; which he wrote to the Trustees for Georgia, that, deducting extraordinary expenses, such as for repairing the Parsonage-house, and journeys to Frederica, there remained for Mr. Delamotte and himself, *44l. 4s. 4d* ! This, with the labours and hardships which he endured, being considered, few, I believe, would expect to hear him express himself as he does in a letter to a friend. "How to attain to the being crucified with Christ, I find not, being in a condition I neither desired nor expected in America, in ease, and honour, and abundance. A strange school, for him who has but one business, *Γυμναζειν σεαυτον πϱος ευσεϐειαν*."* Alas ! few would have envied the situation in which he was placed ! The inconveniencies and dangers, which he underwent, that he might preach the Gospel, and do good of every kind to all that would receive it at his hands, and the exposing himself thus, to every change of season, and inclemency of weather, in the prosecution of his work, were conditions to which few, but himself, would have submitted.

But the honour and respect he then enjoyed, small as it must have been, soon drew to an end, and he began to experience, more fully than ever, the truth of that scripture, *If any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution.* His faithfulness in preaching the word, and in reproving sin, and his strict observance of every part of the Rubrick of the Church of England, especially respecting Baptism and the Lord's Supper, with his repelling Mrs. Williamsom, daughter of Mr. Causton, store-keeper, and chief magistrate of Savannah, from the Communion, drew down upon him the deep, and implacable resentment of some of the leading people at Savannah; so that all things grew more and more unfavourable to his continuing in America. He was not likely to be useful to the English, and the way was not yet open for prosecuting the main design on which they went to America, which was to convert the Indians. Therefore, October 7, 1737, he consulted his friends, whether God did not call him to return to England, and found them unanimous in opinion, that he ought to return, but not immmediately.

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* To exercise himself to Godliness.

In the midst of the storm, now excited and kept up by the arts of his avowed enemies, Mr. Wesley, without a shilling in his pocket, and three thousand miles from home, possessed his soul in peace, and pursued his labours with the same unremitting diligence as if he had enjoyed the greatest tranquillity and ease. Some letters, from those of his friends, to whom he had represented his situation, afforded him support and consolation. One of this kind, from Dr. Cutler, a Clergyman at Boston, contains some thoughts so just, and not very commonly to be met with, that I give it a place here; it is dated October 22. "I am sorry," Sir, says he, "for the clouds hanging over your head, respecting your undertaking and situation; but hope God will give a happy increase to the good seed you have planted and watered, according to his will. The best of men in all ages, have failed in the success of their labours: and there will ever be found too many enemies to the cross of Christ: for earth will not be heaven. This reminds us of that happy place, where we shall not see and be grieved for transgressors; and where, for our well-meant labours, our judgment is with the Lord, and our reward with our God. And you well know, Sir, that under the saddest appearances, we may have some share in the consolations which God gave *Elijah*: and may trust in him, that there is some wickedness we repress or prevent; some goodness by our means, weak and unworthy as we are, beginning and increasing in the hearts of men, at present, perhaps, like a grain of mustand-seed, that in God's time may put forth, and spread, and flourish: and that, if the world seems not the better for us, it might be worse without us. Our low opinion of ourselves is preparative to these successes; and so the modest and great Apostle found it. No doubt, Sir, you have temptations, where you are, nor is there any retreat from them; they hint to us, the care we must take, and the promises we must apply to: and blessed is the man, that endureth temptation.

" I rejoice in the good character you give, which I believe you well bestow, of Mr. Whitefield, who is coming to you.—But I question not, but his labours will be better joined with, than supersede your's: and even his and all our sufficiency and efficiency is of God. It is the least we can do to pray for one another, and if God will hear me, a great sinner, it will strengthen your interest in him. I recommend myself to a share in your prayers, for his pardon, acceptance, and assistance; and beg that my family may not be forgotten by you."

In the mean time he continued his labours, with unremitting diligence. October 30, he gives an account of his work on the *Lord's Day*. " The English service lasted from five to half an hour past six in the morning. The Italian (with a few *Vaudois*,) began at nine. The second service for the English, including the Sermon, and the Holy Communion, continued from half an hour past ten, till about half an hour past twelve. The French service began at one. At two I catechised the children. About three began the English service. After this was ended, I had the happiness of joining with as many as my largest room would hold, in reading, prayer, and singing praise. And about six, the service of the Moravians began, at which I was glad to be present, not as a teacher, but as a learner."

Nov. 1. He received a temporary relief from his pressing wants. "Colonel Stephens," says he, "arrived, by whom I received a benefaction of ten pounds sterling; after having been for several months without one shilling in the house, but not without peace, health, and contentment!"

One material objection made to Mr. Wesley while in America, was, that he thought *cheerfulness* inconsistent with religion. But the following letter which he wrote, March 29, 1737, to a friend in England, is a sufficient answer to that objection. "True friendship," says he, "is doubtless stronger than death, else your's could never have subsisted still, in spite of all opposition, and even after thousands of miles are interposed between us. In the last proof you gave of it, there are a few things which, I think, it lies on me to mention. As to the rest, my brother is the proper person to clear them up, as I suppose he has done long ago.

"You seem to apprehend, that I believe religion inconsistent with cheerfulness, and a sociable temper. So far from it, that I am convinced, as true religion or holiness, cannot be without cheerfulness, so steady cheerfulness, on the other hand, cannot be without holiness or true religion. And I am equally convinced, that religion has nothing sour, austere, unsociable, unfriendly in it; but, on the contrary, implies the most winning sweetness, the most amiable softness* and gentleness. Are you for having as much cheerfulness as you can? So am I. Do you endeavour to keep alive your taste for all the truly innocent pleasures of life? So do I likewise. Do you refuse no pleasure, but what is a hindrance to greater good, or has a tendency to some evil? It is my very rule:—And I know no other, by which a sincere, reasonable Christian can be guided. In particular, I pursue this rule in *eating*, which I seldom do, without much pleasure. And this I know is the will of God concerning me, that I should enjoy every pleasure that leads to my taking pleasure in him: and in such a measure as most leads to it. I know that, as to every action which is naturally pleasing, it is his will that it shonld be so, therefore, in taking that pleasure so far as it tends to this end, (of taking pleasure in God,) I do his will. Here indeed is the hinge of the question, which I had once occasion to state: and more largely in a Sermon on the Love of God. If you will read over these, I believe you will find you differ from Mr. Law and me in words only. You say, The pleasures you plead for are distinct from the love of God, as the cause from the effect. Why then they tend to it; and those which are only thus distinct from it, no one excepts against. The whole of what Mr. Law affirms, and that not on the authority of men, but from the words and example of God incarnate, is, That there is *one thing needful*, viz. *To do the will of God*, and his will is our sanctification; our renewal in the image of God, in faith and love, in holiness, and happiness. On this we are to fix our *single eye*, at all times, and in all places: for so did our Lord. This one thing we are to do; for so did our fellow-servant Paul, after his example. *Whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we are to do all to the glory of God.* In other words, we are to do nothing, but what directly or indirectly leads to holiness, which is his glory; and to do every such thing with this design, and in such a measure as may most promote it.

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* Softness is an equivocal term: but Mr. Wesley does not mean here *effeminacy*, which the Christian religion forbids, and which he always discouraged by his words and conduct.

"I am not mad, my dear friend, for asserting these to be the words of truth and soberness, neither are any of those mad, who, either in England or here, have hitherto attempted to follow me. I am, and must be an example to my flock; not indeed in my prudential rules, but in some measure, (if, giving God the glory, I may dare to say so) in my spirit, and life, and conversation. Yet all of them are, in your sense of the word, unlearned, and most of them of low understanding, and still not one of them has been, as yet, entangled in any case of conscience, which was not solved. And as to the nice distinctions you speak of, it is you, my friend, it is the wise, the learned, the disputers of this world, who are lost in them, and bewildered more and more, the more they strive to extricate themselves. We have no need of nice distinctions, for I advise all,—'Dispute with none.' I feed my brethren in Christ, as he giveth me power, with the pure, unmixed milk of the word. And those who are as little children receive it, not as the word of man, but as the word of God. Some grow thereby, and advance apace, in peace and holiness. They grieve, it is true, for those who did run well, but are now turned back; and they fear for themselves, lest they also should be tempted; yet, through the mercy of God, they despair not, but have still a good hope that they shall endure to the end. Not that this hope has any resemblance to enthusiasm, which is a hope to attain the end without the means. This they know is impossible, and therefore ground their hope on a constant, careful use of all the means. And if they keep in this way, with lowliness, patience, and meekness of resignation, they cannot carry the principle of pressing towards perfection too far. O may you and I carry it far enough! Be fervent in spirit! Rejoice evermore! Pray without ceasing! In every thing give thanks! Do every thing in the name of the Lord Jesus! Abound more and more in all holiness, and in zeal for every good word and work!"

The account of his journey to Charles-Town, from which place he embarked for England, contains such a striking and suitable close to his labours and dangers in America, that I shall give it in his own words.

"Saturday, December 3. We came to Purrysburg early in the morning, and endeavoured to procure a guide to Port Royal. But none being to be had, we set out without one, an hour before sun-rise. After walking two or three hours, we met with an old man, who led us into a small path, near which was a line of *blazed* trees, (i. e. marked by cutting off part of the bark,) by following which, he said, we might easily come to Port Royal in five or six hours.

"We were four in all; one of whom intended to go for England with me; the other two to settle in

Carolina. About eleven we came into a large swamp, where we wandered about till near two. We then found another *blaze*, and pursued it, till it divided into two; one of these we followed through an almost impassable thicket, a mile beyond which it ended. We made through the thicket again, and traced the other *blaze* till that ended too. It now grew toward sun-set, so we sat down faint and weary, having had no food all day, except a ginger-bread cake, which I had taken in my pocket. A third of this we had divided among us at noon; another third we took now; the rest we reserved for the morning; but we had met with no water all the day. Thrusting a stick into the ground, and finding the end of it moist, two of our company fell a digging with their hands, and, at about three feet depth, found water. We thanked God, drank, and were refreshed. The night was sharp; however there was no complaining among us; but after having commended ourselves to God, we lay down close together, and (I at least) slept till near six in the morning.

"Sunday, Dec. 4. God renewing our strength, we arose neither faint nor weary, and resolved to make one trial more, to find a path to Port Royal. We steered due east; but finding neither path nor blaze, and the woods growing thicker and thicker, we judged it would be our best course to return, if we could, by the way we came. The day before, in the thickest part of the woods, I had broke many young trees, I knew not why, as we walked along: these we found a great help in several places, where no path was to be seen; and, between one and two, God brought us safe to Benjamin Arien's house, the old man we left the day before.

"In the evening I read French prayers to a numerous family, a mile from Arien's; one of whom undertook to guide us to Port Royal. In the morning we set out. About sun-set, we asked our guide, If he knew where he was? Who frankly answered, No. However, we pushed on till, about seven, we came to a plantation, and the next evening, after many difficulties and delays, we landed on Port Royal island.

"Wednesday 7. We walked to Beauford, where Mr. Jones, (the minister of Beaufort,) with whom I lodged during my short stay here, gave me a lively idea of the old English hospitality. On Thursday, Mr. Delamotte came; with whom, on Friday 9th, I took boat for Charles-Town. After a slow passage, by reason of contrary winds, and some conflict (our provisions falling short) with hunger as well as cold, we came thither early in the morning, on Tuesday the 13th. Here I expected trials of a different kind, and far more dangerous. For contempt and want are easy to be borne; but who can bear respect and abundance?"

December 16. He parted with his faithful friend Mr. Delamotte, from whom he had been but a few days separate since their departure from England; and on the 22d, took leave of America, "after having preached the gospel," says he, "in Savannah, not as I ought, but as I was able, one year and near nine months."

In the beginning of the following May, Mr. Whitefield arrived at Savannah, where he found some serious persons, the fruits of Mr. Wesley's ministry, glad to receive him. He had now an opportunity of inquiring upon the spot into the circumstances of the late disputes, and bears testimony to the ill usage Mr. Wesley had received; but adds, "he thought it most prudent not to repeat grievances." When he was at Charles-Town, Mr. Garden acquainted him with the ill treatment Mr. Wesley had met with, and assured him, that were the same arbitrary proceedings to commence against him, he would defend him with life and fortune. These testimonies of persons so respectable, and capable of knowing all the circumstances of the affair, coincide with the statement here given; and with candid persons, must do away all suspicions, with regard to the integrity of Mr. Wesley's conduct.

In the trials through which he had lately passed, the Lord had given Mr. Wesley abundant means of self-knowledge, and they were not lost upon him. He now felt more than ever, what he had subscribed to, at his ordination, that he was "far gone from original righteousness," and *had fallen short of the glory of God*, that glorious image of God, in which man was first created. He had weighed himself in the balance of the sanctuary, the word of God; and had attentively marked the lively, victorious faith of more experienced Christians. And January 8, 1738, in the fulness of his heart, he writes thus:

"By the most infallible of proofs, inward feeling, I am convinced,

1. "Of unbelief:—having no such faith in Christ, as will prevent my heart from being troubled in a degree it could not be, if I believed in God, and rightly believed also in Him:

2. "Of pride, throughout my life past, inasmuch as I thought I had, what I find I have not:

3. "Of gross irrecollection, inasmuch as in a storm I cry to God; in a calm, not:

4. "Of levity and luxuriancy of spirit, recurring whenever the pressure is taken off, and appearing by my speaking words not tending to edify; but most, by my manner of speaking of my enemies."

"Lord, save, or I perish! Save me,

1. "By such a faith as implies peace in life, and in death.

2. "By such humility, as may fill my heart from this hour for ever, with a piercing, uninterrupted sense, *Nihil est quod hactenus feci*,* having evidently built without a foundation.

3. "By such a recollection as may enable me to cry unto thee every moment, especially when all is calm. Give me faith, or I die; give me a lowly spirit; otherwise let life be a burden to me.

4. "By steadiness, seriousness, Σεμνοτης, sobriety of spirit, avoiding as fire every word that tendeth not to edifying, and never speaking of any who oppose me, or sin against God, without all my own sins set in array before my face."

"On Monday 9, and the following days," says he, "I reflected much on that vain desire, which had pursued me for so many years, of being in solitude, in order to be a Christian. I have now, thought I, solitude enough. But am I therefore the nearer being a Christian? Not if Jesus Christ be the model of Christianity. I doubt indeed I am much nearer that mystery of Satan, which some writers affect to call by that name. So near, that I had probably sunk wholly into it, had not the great mercy of God just now thrown me upon reading St. Cyprian's works. 'O my soul, come not thou into their secret! Stand thou in the good old paths.'

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* I have done nothing hitherto.

"Friday 13. We had a thorough storm, which obliged us to shut all close, the sea breaking over the ship continually. I was at first afraid; but cried to God, and was strengthened. Before ten I lay down, I bless God, without fear. About midnight we were awaked by a confused noise, of seas, and wind, and men's voices, the like to which I had never heard before. The sound of the sea breaking over, and against the sides of the ship, I could compare to nothing but large cannon, or American thunder. The rebounding, starting, quivering motion of the ship, much resembled what is said of earthquakes. The captain was upon deck in an instant. But his men could not hear what he said. It blew a proper hurricane; which beginning at South-west, then went West, North-west, North, and, in a quarter of an hour, round by the East to the South-west point again. At the same time the sea running (as they term it) mountains high, and that from many different points at once; the ship would not obey the helm; nor indeed could the steersman, through the violent rain, see the compass. So he was forced to let her run before the wind, and in half an hour the stress of the storm was over.

"Tuesday 24. We spoke with two ships, outward bound, from whom we had the welcome news of our wanting but 160 leagues of the Land's-end. My mind was now full of thought; part of which I wrote down as follows:

"'I went to America, to convert the Indians: but, oh! Who shall convert me? Who, what is he that will deliver me from this evil heart of unbelief? I have a fair summer-religion. I can talk well; nay, and believe myself, while no danger is near: but let death look me in the face, and my spirit is troubled. Nor can I say, *To die is gain!*

> ' I have a sin of fear, that when I've spun
> ' My last thread, I shall perish on the shore!'

"I think, verily, if the gospel be true, I am safe: for I not only have given, and do give all my goods to feed the poor; I not only give my body to be burned, drowned, or whatever God shall appoint for me; but I follow after charity (though not as I ought, yet as I can) if haply I may attain it. I *now* believe the Gospel is true, 'I show my faith by my works,' by staking my all upon it. I would do so again and again a thousand times, if the choice were still to make. Whoever sees me, sees I *would* be a Christian. Therefore, 'are my ways not like other men's ways.' Therefore I have been, I am, I am content to be, *a by-word, a proverb of reproach.* But in a storm I think, 'What if the gospel be not true? Then thou art of all men most foolish. For what hast thou given thy goods, thy ease, thy friends, thy reputation, thy country, thy life? For what art thou wandering over the face of the earth? A dream, *a cunningly devised fable?* O! who will deliver me from this fear of death? What shall I do? Whither shall I flee from it?'"

A few days after he enlarges still more on the same subject. "It is now two years, and almost four months, since I left my native country, in order to teach the Georgian Indians the nature of Christianity. But what have I learned myself in the mean time?

Why,

Why, (what I the least of all suspected,) that I who went to America to convert others, was never myself converted to God. *I am not mad*, though I thus speak; but *I speak the words of truth and soberness;* if haply some of those who still *dream* may *awake*, and see, that as I am, so are they.—

"Are they read in Philosophy? So was I. In ancient or modern *Tongues?* So was I also. Are they versed in the *Science* of *Divinity?* I too have studied it many years. Can they talk fluently upon spiritual things? The very same could I do. Are they plenteous in *Alms?* Behold I gave all my goods to feed the poor. Do they give of their labour as well as their substance? I have laboured more abundantly than they all. Are they willing to *suffer* for their brethren? I have thrown up my friends, reputation, ease, country: I have put my life in my hand, wandering into strange lands: I have given my body to be devoured by the deep, parched up with heat, consumed by toil and weariness, or whatsoever God shall please to bring upon me. But does all this, (be it more or less, it matters not,) make me acceptable to God? Does all I ever did or can, *know*, *say*, *give*, *do*, or *suffer*, justify me in his sight? Yea, *or the constant use of all the means of grace?* (which nevertheless it is meet, right, and our bounden duty to use): Or, that *I know nothing of myself*, that I am, as touching outward, moral righteousness, blameless: Or, (to come closer yet,) the having a *Rational Conviction* of all the truths of Christianity? Does all this give me a claim to the holy, divine character of a *Christian?* By no means. If the oracles of God are true, if we are still to abide by *the Law and the Testimony;* all these things, though when enobled by faith in Christ, they are holy, and just, and good, yet without it are *dung and dross.*

"This then have I learned in the ends of the earth, that I am *fallen short of the glory of God;* that my whole heart is *altogether corrupt and abominable,* and consequently my whole life, (seeing it cannot be, that *an evil tree* should *bring forth good fruit:)* That my own works, my own sufferings, my own righteousness, are so far from reconciling me to an offended God, so far from making any atonement for the least of those sins, (which *are more in number than the hairs of my head,)* that the most specious of them need an atonement themselves, or they cannot abide his righteous judgment: that *having the sentence of death* in my heart, and having nothing *in* or *of* myself, to plead, I have no hope, but that of being justified freely *through the redemption that is in Jesus:* I have no hope, but that, if I seek, I shall find Christ, and be found in him not having my own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.

"If it be said, that I have faith, (for many such things have I heard, from many miserable comforters,) I answer, So have the devils—*a sort* of faith; but still they are strangers to the covenant of promise. So the Apostles had even at Cana in Galilee, when Jesus first *manifested forth his glory;* even then they, in a sort, *believed on him;* but they had not then *the faith that overcometh the world.* The faith I want is, 'A sure trust and confidence in God, that through the merits of Christ, my sins are forgiven, and I reconciled to the favour of God.' I want that faith which S. Paul recommends to all the world, especially in his Epistle to the Romans: that faith which enables every one that hath it to cry out, 'I live not; but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.' I want that faith which none can have without knowing that he hath it, (though many *imagine* they have it, who have it not.) For whosoever hath it is *freed from the power of sin:* he is freed from fear, 'having peace with God through Christ, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.' And he is freed from doubt, 'having the love of God shed abroad in his heart, through the Holy Ghost, which is given unto him; which Spirit itself beareth witness with his spirit, that he is a child of God.'"

SECTION III.

OF HIS BECOMING ACQUAINTED WITH SOME EMINENT PERSONS OF THE MORAVIAN CHURCH, AND OF THE LIGHT HE RECEIVED THROUGH THEM CONCERNING THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH.

ON Sunday, January 29, they came within sight of the English shore; and on the 31st, arrived in the Downs. On Wednesday, February 1, 1738, between four and five in the morning, Mr. Wesley landed at Deal; where he was soon informed that Mr. Whitefield had sailed for America, the day before, in order to assist him. He read prayers and expounded a portion of Scripture at the inn, as he did also at other places on the road, and on Friday 3, arrived in London.

After waiting on General Oglethorpe, and on the Trustees for Georgia, he was invited to preach in several of the churches. He now began to be popular, appearing in a new character, as a Missionary lately returned from preaching the Gospel to the Indians in America. The churches where he preached were crowded. This soon produced a complaint, that there was not room "for the best of the parish," and that objection, united to the offence that was given, by his plain *heart-searching* Sermons, produced in each place, at last, the following declaration: "Sir, you must preach here no more."

On Tuesday, February 7, "A day," observes Mr. Wesley, "much to be remembered," he met Peter Bohler, and two other persons, belonging to the Moravian Church, who were just landed from Germany. Having been already acquainted with some of the excellent of the earth, in that Church, he received them with the greatest cordiality. Sunday the 12th, he preached at St. Andrew's, Holborn, on "*Though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not Charity,* (love,) *it profiteth me nothing.*" On which he remarks. "Oh hard sayings! who can bear them? Here too it seems I am to preach no more."

On Friday 17, he set out for Oxford, where he was kindly received by Mr. Sarney, the only one now remaining there of many, who, at his embarking for America, were used to take sweet counsel together, and to rejoice in bearing the reproach of Christ. He had now much conversation with Peter Bohler, who had accompanied him to Oxford, upon the nature and fruits of Christian faith. But although he was a sincere inquirer after truth, yet he made continual objections to the doctrine advanced by his friend, which caused him to reply more than once: *Mi frater, mi frater, excoquenda est ista tua Philosophia.**

Hitherto it is to be observed, he had endeavoured to reduce his religious principles to practice in the most scrupulous and rigorous manner, and yet had not attained that victory over the evils of his own heart, and that peace and happiness, which he saw the gospel promises. It seems as if he had always supposed that bodily austerities, and a religious regard to the duties he owed to God and man, would produce in him the Christian faith, and the true Christian temper. After about ten years of painful labour, his experience convinced him, that his views were not evangelical, that he had considered as *causes*, things, which were only placed as the *fruits* of faith in the gospel economy; and therefore, that he neither possessed saving faith, nor had a right notion of it. Having observed, both at sea, and in America, that the Moravian brethren enjoyed a state of peace and comfort in their minds, to which he was almost wholly a stranger, he was well prepared to hear what these messengers of God had to say of faith as the means of obtaining it. He was determined that this conviction should be the result of knowledge, and therefore made continual objections to what Mr. Bohler said on the subject. We may observe, however, that objections in such cases are seldom the result of just

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* My Brother, my Brother, that Philosophy of your's must be purged away,

reasoning,

reasoning, but the mere effects of prejudice, which a previous system has produced in the mind.

The reproach, which he formerly endured at Oxford, now again revived, and even as he walked through the squares of the Colleges, he was mocked and laughed at. Upon one of these occasions Mr. Bohler, perceiving Mr. Wesley was troubled at it chiefly for his sake, said with a smile, *Mi frater, non adhæret vestibus.**

On the 20th, he returned to London, and the next day, at St. Helens, explained and applied, *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.* And on the Sunday following, preached three times, at different Churches, but with great offence to some. He was now preparing to go to see his brother Samuel at Tiverton, when he received a message that his brother Charles was dying of a pleurisy at Oxford, which obliged him to set out for that place immediately. At this time he renewed and wrote down the following resolutions.

1. To use absolute openness and unreserve with those he should converse with. 2. To labour after continual seriousness, not willingly indulging himself in any the least levity of behaviour. 3. To speak no word which does not tend to the glory of God. And, 4, to take no pleasure which does not tend to his glory, thanking God every moment for all he took, and therefore rejecting every sort and degree of it, which he felt he could not so thank him *in* and *for*. Saturday 4. He found his brother at Oxford recovering from his pleurisy; and with him

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* My Brother, it does not even stick to our clothes.

Peter Bohler: "By whom," says he, "in the hand of the great God, I was, on Sunday the 5th, clearly convinced of unbelief, of the *want of that faith whereby alone we are saved.*" He afterwards added, "*with the full Christian salvation.*" He was now fully convinced that his faith had hitherto been a faith in God, too much separated from an evangelical view of the promises of free justification, through the atonement and mediation of Christ alone; which was the reason why he had been held in continual bondage and fear. It immediately occurred to his mind, "Leave off preaching. How can you preach to others, who have not faith yourself?" He consulted his friend *Bohler*, who said, "By no means. Preach faith *till* you have it, and then *because* you have it, you will preach it."

Thursday the 24th," says he, "I met Peter Bohler again, who now amazed me more, by the account he gave of the fruits of living faith, the holiness and happiness which he affirmed to attend it. The next morning I began the Greek Testament again, resolved to abide by the *law and the testimony*, being confident, that God would hereby shew me whether this doctrine was of God." By this it appears how exceedingly cautious he was, and what unremitting care and diligence he used, to prevent his being deceived in a matter of such moment to his own salvation, and the salvation of others. And when we consider, as Dr. Whitehead has observed, in that excellent Sermon, preached on the occasion of his death, "his qualifications for inquiring after truth, we shall find that he possessed every requisite to examine a subject, that we could expect or wish a man to have; a strong natural understanding, highly cultivated, and well stored with the knowledge of languages, and of various arts and sciences. He had a reverence for God; he was conscientious in all his ways, and intent upon discovering the truth," especially in every matter which he judged to be important. And it evidently appears, that he had firmness and resolution to embrace truth, wherever he found it, however unfashionable it might appear.

This certainly is not the case with all men of learning. Many persuade themselves that they are searching after truth; but if they meet with it dressed in a different form, to that under which they have been accustomed to consider it, they are ashamed of it. This cannot be said of Mr. Wesley; cautious in his inquiries, he sought truth from the love of it; and wherever he found it, had firmness to embrace it; and publicly avow it. Now here he tells us, that, "after conversing with people of experience, he sat down and read his Greek Testament over, with a view to the grand and leading doctrine of justification; he could not be satisfied with any thing less than this; he proceeded upon conviction in every step he took. And let me ask, if any man could proceed with more caution, or take wiser methods to guard against error, in a matter of such importance to his own comfort and happiness, and to the peace and comfort of others?"

Hitherto, it appears, he had confined himself to Forms of Prayer, and chiefly those of the Church of England, when he prayed in public: using at their little meetings, one or two Collects, before and after expounding the Scriptures. But, about this time, he began to pray extempore.

March 27. Mr. Kinchin went with him to the Castle, where, after reading prayers, and preaching on, *It is appointed unto men once to die,* "We prayed," says he, "with the condemned man, first, in several Forms of Prayer, and then, in such words as were given us in that hour. He kneeled down in much heaviness and confusion, having *no rest in his bones by reason of his sins.* After a space he rose up, and eagerly said, *I am now ready to die.—I know Christ has taken away my sins, and there is no more condemnation for me.* The same composed cheerfulness he shewed, when he was carried to execution: and in his last moments he was the same, enjoying a perfect peace, in confidence that he was *accepted in the Beloved.*" Mr. Wesley again observes, that on Saturday, April 1, being at Mr. Fox's Society, he found his heart so full, that he could not confine himself to the Forms of Prayer that they were accustomed to use there. "Neither," says he, "do I purpose to be confined to them any more; but to pray indifferently, with a form or without, as I may find suitable to particular occasions."

Saturday, April 21. He met Peter Bohler once more. "I had now," says he, "no objection to what he said of the nature of Faith, viz. that it is, (to use the words of our Church) '*A sure trust and confidence which a man hath in God that through the merits of Christ, his sins are forgiven, and he is reconciled to the favour of God.*' Neither could I deny either the *happiness* or *holiness* which he described as the fruits of this living faith. *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God;* and, *He that beliveth hath the witness in himself,* fully convinced me of the former: As

Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin; and *Whosoever believeth is born of God,* did of the latter. But I could not comprehend what he spake of an *instantaneous work.* I could not conceive how this faith should be given in a moment: how a man could at *once* be thus turned from darkness unto light, from sin and misery to righteousness and joy in the Holy Ghost. I searched the Scriptures again, touching this very thing, particularly the *Acts of the Apostles.* But, to my utter astonishment, I found scarce any instances there of any other than *instantaneous* conversions; scarce any so slow as that of St. Paul.

"I had but one retreat left, viz. '*Thus,* I grant, God wrought in the *first* ages of Christianity: but the times are changed. What reason have I to believe he works in the same manner now!' But on Sunday 22, I was beat out of this retreat too, by the concurring evidence of several living witnesses; who testified, *God had thus wrought in themselves;* giving them in a moment, such a faith in the blood of his Son, as translated them out of darkness into light, out of sin and fear into holiness and happiness. Here ended my disputing. I could now only cry out, '*Lord, help thou my unbelief.*'"

Here again, we may trace the marks of a great and liberal mind; when he knew the truth he embraced it, though it condemned him. This is not the case with all: how many see the truth and shrink from it; he, on the contrary, embraced it, though he knew the profession of it would expose him to ridicule, contempt, and reproach. Is it possible for any man to give a stronger proof than this, that he acts from conviction; and from a love of (what he conceives to be) the truth? Had all those who have read Mr. Wesley's writings, or heard him preach, acted with the same sincerity and firmness that he did, the number of converts would have been much greater, than we have yet seen it.

He now began to declare the *faith as it is in Jesus*, a doctrine which those that were convinced of sin gladly received. A day or two after, he was much confirmed in the truth, by hearing the experience of Mr. Hutchens of Pembroke College, and Mr. Fox: "Two living witnesses," says he, "that God can, at least, if he does not always, give that faith, whereof cometh salvation, in a moment."

May 1. They began to form themselves into a Society, which met in Fetter-Lane. This has been called the first Methodist Society in London. Mr. Wesley distinguishes the origin of Methodism into three different periods. "The *first* rise of Methodism," says he, "was in November, 1729, when four of us met together at Oxford. The *second* was at Savannah, in April, 1736, when twenty or thirty persons met at my house. The last was at London on this day, when forty or fifty of us agreed to meet together every Wednesday evening, in order to free conversation, begun and ended with singing and prayer." The Rules of the Society now formed, were printed under the title of, *Orders of a Religious Society, meeting in Fetter-Lane, in obedience to the command of God by St. James, and by the advice of Peter Bohler.* It was then agreed,

1. "That they would meet together once a week, to confess their faults one to another, and to pray one for another that they might be healed.

2. "That the persons so meeting should be divided into several Bands, or little companies, none

of them consisting of fewer than five, or of more than ten persons.

3. "That every one in order should speak as freely, plainly, and concisely as he could, the real state of his heart, with his several temptations and deliverances, since the last time of meeting.

4. "That all the Bands should have a Conference at eight, every Wednesday evening, begun and ended with singing and prayer.

5. "That any who desired to be admitted into this society should be asked, What are your reasons for desiring this? Will you be intirely open, using no kind of reserve? Have you any objection to any of our orders? (which were then read.)

6. "That when any new member was proposed, every one present should speak clearly and freely whatever objection he had to him.

7. "That those against whom no reasonable objection appeared, should be, in order for their trial, formed into one or more distinct bands, and some person agreed on to assist them.

8. "That after two months' trial, if no objection then appeared, they should be admitted into the Society.

9. "That every fourth Saturday should be observed, as a day of general intercession.

10. "That, on the Sunday seven-night following, should be a general love-feast, from seven till ten in the evening.

11. "That no particular member should be allowed to act in any thing, contrary to any order of the society: and that, if any persons, after being thrice admonished, did not conform thereto, they should not be any longer esteemed as members."

The return of his brother's illness had obliged Mr. Wesley to hasten to London. In the evening of this day, (May 1,) he found him better as to his health than he expected: but strongly averse from, what he called, the "new faith." On the Wednesday following, however, after a long and particular conversation with Peter Bohler, "it pleased God," says Mr. Wesley, "to open his eyes, so that he also saw clearly what is the nature of that one, true living faith, whereby alone *through grace we are saved.*"

The next day Peter Bohler left London in order to embark for America. Upon this occasion, Mr. Wesley remarks, in the fulness of his heart, "Oh what a work hath God begun since his coming to England! such an one as shall never come to an end, till heaven and earth shall pass away." There were now, indeed, several witnesses to the truth which he had spoken, whose testimony mightily encouraged others to come to the throne of grace, that they also might be partakers of like precious faith.

Wednesday 10. Mr. Stonehouse, vicar of Islington, was convinced of the truth as it is in Jesus, "From this time, till Saturday 13," says Mr. Wesley, "I was sorrowful and very heavy. Yet I was a little refreshed by Peter Bohler's letter, a translation of which I here insert."

"I love you greatly, and think much of you in my journey, wishing and praying that the tender mercies of Jesus Christ the crucified, whose bowels were toward you more than six thousand years ago, may be manifested to your soul: that you may taste and then see, how exceedingly the Son of God has loved you, and loves you still; and that so you may continually trust in him, and feel his life in yourself.

Beware of Unbelief; and if you have not conquered it yet, see that your conquer it this very day, through the blood of Jesus Christ. Delay not, I beseech you, to believe in *your* Jesus Christ; but so put him in mind of his promises to poor sinners, that he may not be able to refrain from doing for you what he hath done for so many others. O how great, how inexpressible, how unexhausted is his love! Surely he is now ready to help; and nothing can offend him but our Unbelief.—

"The Lord bless you! Abide in faith, love, teaching, the communion of saints; and briefly, in all which we have in the New Testament.

"I am, your unworthy Brother,

"PETER BOHLER."

Whenever Mr. Wesley was now invited to preach in the Churches, he boldly offered to all a free Salvation through faith in the blood of Christ. This he did, Sunday, May 14, at St. Ann's, Aldersgate, in the morning, and at the Savoy Chapel in the afternoon. "I was quickly apprized," says he, "that at St. Ann's likewise I am to preach no more." To illustrate the reason of the offence which this doctrine gave, he has inserted in his Journal, part of a letter written by Mr. Gambold to Mr. Charles Wesley, a little after this time. This letter abounds with fine thoughts on this subject, and contains some excellent advice: it is as follows.

"I have seen upon this occasion, more than ever I could have imagined, how intolerable the doctrine of Faith is to the mind of man; and how peculiarly intolerable to *religious* men. One may say the most unchristian things, even down to deism; the most enthusiastic things, so they proceed but upon mental raptures, lights, and unions; the most severe things, even the whole rigour of ascetick mortification; and all this will be forgiven. But if you speak of faith in such a manner as makes Christ a Saviour to the utmost, a most universal help and refuge; in such a manner as takes away glorying, but adds happiness to wretched man; as discovers a greater pollution in the best of us, than we could before acknowledge, but brings a greater deliverance from it than we could before expect: if any one offer to talk at this rate, he will be heard with the same abhorrence, as if he was going to rob mankind of their salvation, their mediator, or their hopes of forgiveness. I am persuaded that a *Montanist* or a *Novation*, who, from the height of his purity, should look down with contempt upon poor sinners, and exclude them from all mercy, would not be thought such an overthrower of the gospel, as he who should learn from the author of it, to be a friend of publicans and sinners, and to sit down upon the level with them, as soon as they begin to repent.

" But this is not to be wondered at. For all *religious* people have a quantity of righteousness, acquired by much painful exercise, and formed at last into current habits; which is their wealth, both for this world and the next. Now, all other schemes of religion are either so complaisant, as to tell them, they are very rich and have enough to triumph in; or else only a little rough, but friendly in the main, by telling them, their riches are not yet sufficient, but by such arts of self denial, and mental refinement, they may enlarge their stock. But the doctrine of Faith is a downright robber. It takes away all this wealth, and only tells us, it is deposited for us with some body else, upon whose bounty we must live like mere beggars. Indeed, they that are truly beggars, vile and filthy sinners till very lately, may stoop to live in this dependent condition: it suits them well enough. But they who have long distinguished themselves from the herd of vicious wretches, or have even gone beyond moral men; for them to be told, that they are but the same needy, impotent, insignificent vessels of mercy with the others: this is more shocking to reason than transubstantiation. For reason had rather resign its pretensions to judge what is bread or flesh, than have this honour wrested from it, to be the architect of virtue and righteousness. But where am I running? My design was only to give you warning, that wherever you go, *this foolishness of preaching* will alienate hearts from you, and open mouths against you."

He was further encouraged on the 19th, by receiving intelligence that his brother was made a partaker of living faith, and that, although he had had a second return of his pleurisy, his bodily strength had returned from that hour. "Who," observes Mr. Wesley, on this occasion, " is so great a God, as our God?"

Mr. Wesley now hungered and thirsted more and more after righteousness, even *the righteousness which is of God by faith*. He saw the promise of justification and life, was the *free gift of God through Jesus Christ*. The nearer he approached to the enjoyment of it, the more distinctly he perceived, and more strongly felt his own sinfulness, guilt, and helplessness, which he thus expressed in a letter to a friend.

"O why is it, that so great, so wise, so holy a God, will use such an instrument as I? Lord, *let the dead bury their dead!* But wilt thou send the dead to raise the dead? Yea, thou sendest whom thou *wilt send*, and shewest mercy by whom thou *wilt* shew mercy! Amen! Be it then according to thy will! If thou speak the word, Judas shall cast out devils.—

"I feel what you say, (although not enough,) for I am under the same condemnation. I see that the whole law of God is holy, just, and good. I know every thought, every temper of my soul ought to bear God's image and superscription. But how am I fallen from the glory of God! I feel that I *am sold under sin.* I know that I too deserve nothing but wrath, being full of all abominations: and having no good thing in me, to atone for them, or to remove the wrath of God. All my works, my righteousness, my prayers need an atonement for themselves. So that my mouth is stopped. I have nothing to plead. God is holy, I am unholy. God is a consuming fire. I am altogether a sinner, meet to be consumed.

"Yet, I hear a voice (and is it not the voice of God?) saying, 'Believe, and thou shalt be saved. He that believeth, is passed from death unto life. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotton Son, that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.'

"O let no one deceive us by vain words, as if we had already attained this faith! By its fruits we shall know. Do we already feel *peace with God*, and *joy in the Holy Ghost?* Does his *Spirit bear witness with* *our spirits, that we are the children of God?* Alas! with mine he does not. Nor, I fear, with your's. O thou Saviour of men, save us from trusting in any thing but *Thee!* Draw us after thee! Let us be emptied of ourselves, and then fill us with all peace and joy in believing, and let nothing separate us from thy love, in time or in eternity!

" What occurred on Wednesday 24, says he, I think best to relate at large, after premising what may make it the better understood. Let him that cannot receive it, ask of the Father of Lights, that he would give more light to him and me.

1. " I believe till I was about ten years old, I had not sinned away that *Washing of the Holy Ghost* which was given me in Baptism, having been strictly educated and carefully taught, that I could only be saved *by universal obedience, by keeping all the commandments of God;* in the meaning of which I was diligently instructed. And those instructions, so far as they respected outward duties and sins, I gladly received and often thought of. But all that was said to me of inward obedience, or holiness, I neither understood nor remembered. So that I was indeed as ignorant of the true meaning of the law, as I was of the gospel of Christ.

2. " The next six or seven years were spent at school: where outward restraints being removed, I was much more negligent than before, even of outward duties, and almost continually guilty of outward sins, which I knew to be such, although they were not scandalous in the eye of the world. However, I still read the Scriptures, and said my prayers morning and evening. And what I now hoped to be saved by, was, 1. *Not being so bad as other people.* 2. *Having*

Having still a kindness for religion. And, 3. *Reading the Bible, going to Church, and saying my Prayers.*

3. "Being removed to the University, for five years, I still said my prayers both in public and in private, and read, with the Scriptures, several other books of religion, especially comments on the New Testament. Yet, I had not, all this while, so much as a notion of inward holiness; nay, went on habitually, and (for the most part) very contentedly in some or other known sin: indeed with some intermissions and short struggles, especially before and after the Holy Communion, which I was obliged to receive thrice a year. I cannot well tell what I hoped to be saved by now, when I was continually sinning against that little light I had: unless by those transient fits of what many Divines taught me to call *Repentance.*

4. "When I was about twenty-two, my father pressed me to enter into Holy Orders. At the same time the Providence of God directing me to *Kempis's Christian Pattern*, I began to see, that true Religion is seated in the heart, and that God's law extends to all our thoughts as well as words and actions. I was, however, very angry at Kempis, for being *too strict*, though I read him only in Dean Stanhope's Translation. Yet I had frequently much sensible comfort in reading him, such as I was an utter stranger to before: and meeting likewise with a religious friend, which I had never had till now, I began to alter the whole form of my conversation, and to set in earnest upon a *New Life.* I set apart an hour or two a day for religious retirement; I communicated every week. I watched against all sin, whether in

word or deed. I began to aim at, and pray for inward holiness. So now, *doing so much, and living so good a life*, I doubted not but I was a good Christian.

5. " Removing soon after to another College, I executed a resolution, which I was before convinced was of the utmost importance; shaking off at once all my trifling acquaintance. I began to see more and more the value of time. I applied myself closer to study. I watched more carefully against actual sins: I advised others to be religious, according to that scheme of religion, by which I modelled my own life. But meeting now with Mr. Law's *Christian Perfection, and Serious Call*, (although I was much offended at many parts of both, yet) they convinced me, more than ever, of the exceeding height, and breadth, and depth of the Law of God. The light flowed in so mightily upon my soul, that every thing appeared in a new view. I cried to God for help, and resolved not to prolong the time of obeying him as I had never done before. And by my continual *endeavour to keep his whole Law*, inward and outward, *to the utmost of my power*, I was persuaded, that I should be accepted of him, and that I was even then in a state of salvation.

6. " In 1730, I began visiting the prisons, assisting the poor and sick in the town, and doing what other good I could, by my presence or my little fortune, to the bodies and souls of all men. To this end I abridged myself of all superfluities, and of many that are called necessaries of life. I soon became *a by-word* for so doing, and I rejoiced that *my name was cast out as evil.* The next spring I began observing the Wednesday and Friday Fasts, commonly

observed in the ancient church; tasting no food till three in the afternoon. And now I knew not how to go any further. I diligently strove against all sin. I omitted no sort of self-denial which I thought lawful. I carefully used, both in public and in private, all the means of grace at all opportunities. I omitted no occasion of doing good. I for that reason suffered evil. And all this I knew to be nothing, unless as it was directed toward inward holiness. Accordingly this, the image of God, was what I aimed at in all, by doing his will, not my own. Yet when, after continuing some years in this course, I apprehended myself to be near death, I could not find that all this gave me any comfort, or any assurance of acceptance with God. At this I was then not a little surprised; not considering that *other foundation can no man lay, than that which is laid by* God, *even* Christ Jesus.

7. "Soon after, a contemplative man convinced me still more than I was convinced before, that outward works are nothing, being alone: and in several conversations instructed me, how to pursue inward holiness, or a union of the soul with God. But even of his instructions (though I then received them as the word of God) I cannot but now observe, 1. That he spoke so incautiously against *trusting* in *outward works*, that he discouraged me from *doing* them at all. 2. That he recommended, (as it were, to supply what was wanting in them) *mental prayer*, and the like exercises, as the most effectual means of purifying the soul, and uniting it with God. Now these were, in truth, as much *my own works* as visiting the sick, or clothing the naked, and the *union with* God

thus pursued, was as really *my own righteousness*, as any I had before pursued, under another name.

8. " In this *refined* way of trusting to my own works, and my own righteousness, (so zealously inculcated by the *mystic* writers) I dragged on heavily, finding no comfort or help therein, till the time of my leaving England. On shipboard, however, I was again active in outward works: where it pleased God, of his free mercy, to give me twenty-six of the Moravian brethren for companions, who endeavoured to shew me a more excellent way. But I understood it not at first. I was too learned, and too wise. So that it seemed foolishness unto me. And I continued preaching and following after, and trusting in that righteousness, whereby no flesh can be justified.

9. " All the time I was at Savannah, I was thus *beating the air*. Being ignorant of the righteousness of God, which, by a living faith in Christ, bringeth salvation *to every one that believeth*, I sought to establish my own righteousness, and so laboured in the fire all my days. I was now, properly *under the Law;* I knew that, 'the Law of God was spiritual;' 'I consented to it, that it was good. Yea, I delighted in it after the inner man.' Yet I was 'carnal, sold under sin.' Every day I was constrained to cry out, 'What I do I allow not; for what I would, I do not, but what I hate, that I do. To will is indeed present with me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not. For the good which I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. I find a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me: even the law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and still bringing me into captivity to the law of sin.'

10. "In this state, I was indeed fighting continually, but not conquering. Before, I had willingly served sin; now it was unwillingly, but still I served it. I fell, and rose, and fell again. Sometimes I was overcome, and in heaviness. Sometimes I overcame, and was in joy. For, as in the former state, I had some foretastes of the terrors of the law, so had I in this of the comforts of the gospel. During this whole struggle between nature and grace, (which had now continued above ten years) I had many remarkable returns to prayer, especially when I was in trouble: I had many sensible comforts, which are indeed no other than short anticipations of the life of faith. But I was still *under the Law*, not *under Grace*, (the state in which most who are called christians are content to live and die.) For I was only *striving with*, not *freed from the guilt and power of sin*, neither had I the *witness of the Spirit with my spirit.* And indeed I could not: for, I sought it not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the Law.

11. "In my return to England, January 1738, being in imminent danger of death, and very uneasy on that account, I was strongly convinced, that the cause of that uneasiness was unbelief, and that the gaining a true, living faith, was the *one thing needful* for me. But still I fixed not this faith on its right object: I meant only faith in God, not faith in or through Christ. Again, I knew not that I was *wholly void of this faith*: but only thought, *I had not enough* of it. So that when Peter Bohler, whom God prepared for me as soon as I came to London, affirmed of true faith in Christ, (which is but one) that it had those two fruits inseparably attending it, 'dominion over sin, and constant peace from a sense of forgiveness,'

ness,' I was quite amazed, and looked upon it as a new Gospel. If this were so, it was clear, I had not faith. But I was not willing to be convinced of this. Therefore I disputed with all my might, and laboured to prove, that faith may be where these are not; especially where the sense of forgiveness is not. For all the scriptures relating to this, I had been long since taught to construe away, and to call all Presbyterians who spoke otherwise.

12. "When I met Peter Bohler again, he consented to put the dispute upon the issue which I desired, viz. Scripture and Experience. I first consulted the Scripture. But when I set aside the glosses of men, and simply considered the words of God, comparing them together, and endeavouring to illustrate the obscure by the plainer passages, I found they all made against me, and was forced to retreat to my last hold, 'That experience would never agree with the *literal interpretation* of those scriptures. Nor could I therefore allow it to be true, till I found some living witnesses of it.' He replied, 'He could shew me such at any time; if I desired it, the next day.' And accordingly the next day, he came again with three others, all of whom testified, of their own personal experience, that a true living faith in Christ, is inseparable from a sense of pardon for all past, and freedom from the power of all present sins. They added, with one mouth, that this faith was the gift, the free gift of God, and that he would surely bestow it upon every soul, who earnestly and perseveringly sought it. I was now fully convinced. And, by the grace of God, I resolved to seek it unto the end: 1. By absolutely renouncing all dependence, in whole or in part, upon *my own* works or righteousness, on

which I had really grounded my hope of salvation, though I knew it not, from my youth up. 2. By adding to a *constant use* of all the other *means of grace*, continual prayer for this very thing, justifying, saving faith, a full reliance on the blood of Christ shed for *me;* a trust in him, as *my* Christ, *my* sole justification, sanctification, and redemption.

13. " I continued thus to seek it, (though with strange indifference, dulness, and coldness, and unusually frequent relapses into sin) till Wednesday, May 24. I think it was about five this morning, that I opened my Testament on these words, Τα μεγιστα ημιν και τιμια επαγγελματα δεδωρηται, ινα γενεσθε θειας κοινωνοι φυσεως, ' There are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye should be partakers of the divine nature,' 2 Pet. i. 4. Just as I went out, I opened it again on those words, ' Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.' In the afternoon I was asked to go to St. Paul's. The Anthem was, ' Out of the deep have I called unto thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice. O let thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint. If thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? But there is mercy with thee; therefore, thou shalt be feared. O Israel, trust in the Lord. For with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption. And he shall redeem Israel from all his sins.'

14. " In the evening I went very unwillingly to a Society in Aldersgate-Street, where one was reading Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans.— About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I

felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation. And an assurance was given me, That he had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death."

His soul now magnified the Lord, and his spirit rejoiced in God his Saviour: because he was a Son, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into his heart, crying, Abba Father: the Spirit itself bearing witness with his spirit that he was a child of God. The love of God was shed abroad in his heart, by the Holy Ghost given to him, and he rejoiced in God, by whom he had now received the atonement.

Now that he was a child of God, he brought forth the fruit of the Spirit: as soon as he was thus enabled to love God, he loved every child of man. "Immediately," says he, "I began to pray, with all my might, for those who had in a most especial manner despitefully used and persecuted me." And in this thankful, loving, happy frame of mind, he continued, believing in God, and zealous of good works.

His heart was now enlarged to declare, as he never had before, the loving-kindness of the Lord. *It was his meat and drink, to do his holy and acceptable will.* The word of God dwelt richly in him, and was in his mouth, as a *sharp two-edged sword* to the wicked, but to those who felt the anguish of a *wounded spirit*, who had turned at God's reproof, he was an *able minister of the New Testament, holding forth the Word of Life, that they also might rejoice in God, their Saviour.*

But he also experienced, what it was to be weak in this faith, as well as, afterwards, to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. He was often in heaviness through manifold temptations. Sometimes fear came suddenly upon him: fear that he had deceived himself, and stopped short of that grace of God which he had sought for. At other times, letters, which he received from injudicious persons, concerning the *New Birth*, and the fruits of Christian faith, troubled him. Few helped, and many strove, (most of them ignorantly) to hinder: to cause him to cast away *that confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.*

But the Lord, who had *brought him up out of the horrible pit* of guilt and unbelief, suffered not his tender new-born spirit to faint before him. He often lifted up his head with joy, and girded him with strength.

Under these various exercises of mind, he determined to retire for a short time to Germany. "I had fully purposed," says he, "before I left Georgia, so to do, if it should please God to bring me back to Europe. And I now clearly saw the time was come. My weak mind could not bear to be thus sawn asunder. And I hoped the conversing with those holy men, who were themselves living witnesses of the full power of faith, and yet able to bear with these that were weak, would be a means, under God, of so establishing my soul, that I might go on from faith to faith, and from strength to strength."

Accordingly, having taken leave of his mother, he embarked at Gravesend, accompanied by Mr. Ingham, and on Thursday morning, June 15th, landed at Rotterdam.

On his journey through Holland and Germany, he conversed with, and was hospitably entertained by many, who were happy partakers of the faith of the gospel, especially at Marienbourn, where he first conversed with Count Zinzendorf, Count de Solmes, and other eminent persons; and with a large company of witnesses of the power of true religion. From this place he wrote a letter to his brother Samuel, of which the following is an extract.

"God has given me at length the desire of my heart. I am with a Church whose *conversation is in heaven*, in whom is the mind that was in Christ, and who so walk as he walked. As they have all *one Lord*, and *one faith*, so they are all partakers of *one spirit*, the spirit of meekness and love, which uniformly and continually animates all their conversation. O how high and holy a thing is Christianity! And how widely different from that which is so called, though it neither purifies the heart, nor renews the life, after the image of our blessed Redeemer."

July 19, Mr. Wesley left Marienbourn, and, August 1, arrived at Hernhuth. Here he stayed a fortnight; during which time he had frequent opportunities of conversing with the most experienced of the Brethren in that place; of hearing several of them preach, and of acquainting himself with their whole economy. "I would gladly," says he, "have spent my life here; but my Master calling me to labour in another part of his vineyard, on Monday, August the 14th, I was constrained to take my leave of this happy place. Oh! when shall THIS Christianity cover the earth, *as the waters cover the sea!*" He adds, in another place, "I was exceedingly comforted and strengthened by the conversation of this lovely people, and returned to England more fully determined to spend my life, in testifying the gospel of the grace of God."

SECTION IV.

OF THE STEPS WHEREBY HE WAS LED TO INTRODUCE ITINERANT AND FIELD-PREACHING, AND OF THE SUCCESS OF HIS LABOURS AMONG THE COLLIERS OF KINGSWOOD.

SEPTEMBER 16, 1739. He arrived again in London, having no intention, but to preach the gospel in the churches; and accordingly, wherever he was invited, he boldly declared, *by grace ye are saved through faith.* This doctrine branched into all its parts, was opposed by most of the Clergy: and in most places, the genteel parts of the congregation were offended at the crowds that followed him, so that most of the churches were soon shut against him.

But as he had the will, so the providence of God afforded him the means of testifying the Gospel. His own little Society was now increased to thirty-two persons: and many other religious communities, in various parts of the town, received him gladly. *Newgate* was not yet shut against him. He made excursions into the country, visited Oxford, and preached to the prisoners in the Castle. Being thus, to use St. Paul's words, *Instant in season, and out of season*, embracing every opportunity that offered, of publicly declaring the truth, in every company, and to every individual, with whom he conversed; it could not be but many reports would be spread concerning him in every place. The effect, as of old, was, "Some said, He is a good man; and others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people: and the multitude was divided."

The points he chiefly insisted on, were four: First, that *orthodoxy* is, at best, but a very slender part of religion: that neither does religion consist in *negatives*, in bare harmlessness of any kind; nor merely in *externals*, doing good, or using the means of grace; in works of piety, (so called) or of charity; that it is nothing short of, or different from, *The mind that was in Christ, the image of God*, stamped upon the heart, inward *righteousness*, attended with the *peace of God*, and *joy in the Holy Ghost.* Secondly, That the only way under heaven to this religion, is—*to repent and believe the gospel*, or, as the Apostle expresses it,—*Rpentance towards God, productive of fruits worthy of repentance*, *and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, working by love.* Thirdly, That by this faith, *believing on him that justifieth the ungodly*, *we are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ.* And, lastly, That being *justified by faith*, we taste of the heaven to which we are going: we are holy and happy: we tread down sin and fear; and *sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus.*

But, while he thus strove to save others, he did not neglect himself. October 9. Meeting with the *Narrative* of the revival of the work of God about the town of Northampton, in New-England, he sent an extract of it to a friend. Receiving in his answer an account of the marks of *true conversion*, he determined to examine himself, *whether he was in the faith.* He speaks as follows:

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith." Now the surest test, whereby we can examine ourselves,

selves, whether we be indeed in the faith, is that given by St. Paul. ‘ If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new.’

“ First. His judgments are new : his judgment of himself, of happiness, of holiness.

“ He judges himself to be altogether fallen short of the glorious image of God. To have no good thing abiding in him by nature: but all that is corrupt and abominable. Thus, by the grace of God in Christ, I judge of myself. Therefore I am, in this respect, a new creature.

“ Again. His judgment concerning happiness is new. He would as soon expect to dig it out of the earth, as to find it in riches, honour, pleasure, (so called,) or indeed in the enjoyment of any creature. He knows there can be no happiness on earth, but in the enjoyment of God, and in the foretaste of those ‘ rivers of pleasure which flow at his right hand for evermore.’ Thus, by the grace of God in Christ, I judge of happiness. Therefore I am, in this respect, a new creature.

“ Yet again. His judgment concerning holiness is new. He no longer judges it to be an outward thing. To consist, either in doing no harm, in doing good, or in using the ordinances of God. He sees it is the life of God in the soul; the image of God fresh stamped on the heart. An entire renewal of the mind in every temper, after the likeness of him that created it. Thus, by the grace of God in Christ, I judge of holiness. Therefore I am, in this respect, a new creature.

“ Secondly. His designs are new. It is the design of his life, not to heap up treasures upon earth, not to gain the praise of men, not to indulge the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eye, or the pride of life; but to regain the image of God; to have the life of God again planted in his soul; and to be renewed after his likeness, in righteousness and all true holiness. This, by the grace of God in Christ, is the design of my life. Therefore I am, in this respect, a new creature.

"Thirdly. His desires are new, and indeed the whole train of his passions and inclinations. They are no longer fixed on earthly things. They are now set on the things of heaven. His love, and joy, and hope, his sorrow and fear, have all respect to things above. They all point heavenward. Where his treasure is, there is his heart also. I dare not say I am a new creature in this respect. For other desires often arise in my heart. But they do not reign. I put them all under my feet, through Christ which strengtheneth me. Therefore I believe He is creating me anew in this also, and that he has begun, though not finished his work.

"Fourthly. His conversation is new. It is 'always seasoned with salt, and fit to minister grace to the hearers.' So is mine, by the grace of God in Christ. Therefore, in this respect, I am a new creature.

"Fifthly. His actions are new. The tenor of his life singly points at the glory of God. All his substance and time are devoted thereto. 'Whether he eats or drinks, or whatever he does,' it either springs from, or leads to the love of God and man. Such, by the grace of God in Christ, is the tenor of my life. Therefore, in this respect, I am a new creature."

He concludes thus: " Upon the whole, although I have not yet that *joy in the Holy Ghost*, nor the full assurance of faith, much less am I, in the full sense of the words, *in Christ a new Creature*; I nevertheless trust that I have a measure of faith, and *am accepted in the Beloved.* I trust *the hand-writing that was against me is blotted out*, and that I am reconciled to God through his Son."

The whole of this examination of himself plainly shews, that, in judging of his conversion, Mr. Wesley placed no confidence in visions, dreams, nor sudden impressions on the mind; but calmly and rationally examined, whether he had true, scriptural evidence, that he was *passed from death unto life.*

December 11. Hearing that Mr. Whitefield was returned from Georgia, he hastened to London to meet him, and they once more took sweet counsel together. A few other Clergymen now united themselves to them, convinced that the *New Doctrine*, vulgarly called *Methodism*, was indeed the old doctrine of the Bible, and of the Church of England.

In the spring, Mr. Whitefield went down to Bristol, and there first began to preach in the open air, to incredible numbers of people. Mr. Wesley continued his labours in London and Oxford alternately, and occasionally in the neighbouring places, without any intention of altering his usual manner of proceeding. But in the latter end of March, he received a letter from Mr. Whitefield, who entreated him, in the most pressing manner, to come to Bristol, evidently that he might step into this new path, which now lay open before him. At first he was not at all forward to comply with the request, and his brother Charles, and some others, warmly opposed his going; from an unaccountable apprehension that it would prove fatal to him. At length, Mr. Wesley freely gave himself up, to be directed in this instance by the Society, who, after some debate, determined he should comply with the request of Mr. Whitefield. He left London the next day, and on the 31st arrived in Bristol.

Although Mr. Whitefield had begun to preach in the fields and high-ways, the religious Societies, which first received him, not being able to provide room for a tenth part of the people that crowded to hear him; yet, when Mr. Wesley arrived, he at first expounded in one of the Society rooms. But being encouraged by considering the example of our Lord, who preached upon a mountain, and having no place to contain the multitudes that flocked together, "I submitted," says he, "to be yet more vile, and proclaimed in the high-ways, the glad tidings of salvation, speaking from a little eminence in a ground adjoining to the city, to about three thousand people. The Scripture on which I spoke was this,—(is it possible, any one should be ignorant, that this is fulfilled in every true minister of Christ?) *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor. He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted: to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind: to set at liberty them that are bruised: to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.*"

It appears that his adopting this way of preaching the Gospel to the poor, was not of choice. "When," says he, "I was told, I must preach no more in this, and another Church, so much the more those, who could not hear me there, flocked together when I was at any of the societies; where I spoke more or less, though with much inconvenience, to as many as the room I was in would contain.

"But after a time, finding those rooms could not contain a tenth part of the people that were earnest to hear, I determined to do the same thing in England, which I had often done in a warmer climate: namely, when the house would not contain the congregation, to preach in the open air. This I accordingly did, first at Bristol, where the Society-rooms were exceedingly small, and at Kingswood, where we had no room at all; afterwards in or near London.

"And I cannot say, I have ever seen a more awful sight, than when on Rose Green, or the top of Hannam Mount, some thousands of people were calmly joined together in solemn waiting upon God, while

'They stood, and under open air ador'd
'The God who made both air, earth, heaven,
and sky.'

"And whether they were listening to his word, with attention still as night; or were lifting up their voice in praise, as the sound of many waters: many a time have I been constrained to say in my heart, 'How dreadful is this place! this also is no other than *the House of God! this is the Gate of Heaven!*

"Be pleased to observe: 1. That I was forbidden, as by a general consent, to preach in any church, (though not by any judicial sentence,) 'for preaching such doctrine.' This was the open, avowed cause: there was at that time no other, either real or pretended; (except that the people crowded so.) 2. That I had no desire or design to preach in the open air, till long after this prohibition. 3. That when I did, as it was no matter of choice, so neither of premeditation. There was no scheme at all previously formed, which was to be supported thereby; nor had I any other end in view than this, to save as many souls as I could. 4. *Field-preaching* was therefore a sudden expedient, a thing submitted to, rather than chosen; and therefore submitted to, because I thought preaching even thus, better than not preaching at all: First, in regard to my own soul, because, a dispensation of the gospel being committed to me, I did not dare, not to preach the gospel: Secondly, in regard to the souls of others, whom I every where saw, *seeking death in the error of their life.*"

He still continued to expound in the Society-rooms, but it was in the open air the Lord chiefly wrought by his ministry. Many thousands now attended the word. In the suburbs of Bristol, at Bath, in Kingswood, on Hannam Mount, and Rose Green, many who had set all laws, human and divine, at defiance, and were utterly *without God in the world*, now fell before the Majesty of Heaven, and joyfully acknowledged, That a prophet was sent among them. Cries and tears, on every hand, frequently drowned his voice, while many exclaimed in the bitterness of their souls, "What shall I do to be saved?" Not a few of these were now, (and frequently while he was declaring the willingness of Christ to receive them,) filled with *peace and joy in believing*, and evidenced that the work was really of God, by a holy, happy, and unblamable walking before him. Blasphemies were now turned to praise, and the voice of joy and gladness was found, where wickedness and misery had reigned before.

A few here also, in the first instance, and then a greater number, agreed to meet together, to edify and strengthen each other, according to the example of the Society in London. Some of these were desirous of building a room, large enough to contain, not only the Society, but such also as might desire to be present with them, when the Scriptures were expounded. And on Saturday the 12th of May, 1739, the first stone was laid, with the voice of praise and thanksgiving.

His ordinary employment (in public) was now as follows: every morning he read prayers, and preached at Newgate. Every evening he expounded a portion of Scripture, at one, or more of the Societies. On Monday in the afternoon, he preached abroad near Bristol; on Tuesday at Bath, and Two-Mile-Hill, alternately. On Wednesday at Baptist-Mills. Every other Thursday near Pensford. Every other Friday in another part of Kingswood. On Saturday in the afternoon, and Sunday morning, in the Bowling-Green, (which lies near the middle of the city.) On Sunday at eleven, near Hannam-Mount. At two, at Clifton; and at five, on Rose-Green. "And hitherto," says he, "as my day is, so my strength hath been."

In the city, in the suburbs, and in Newgate, sinners were daily humbled under the mighty hand of God, and made, by his grace, *new creatures in Christ Jesus.*—Besides the general blessing that accompanied his labours, the Lord gave special *times of refreshing from his presence.*

At this time he was almost continually asked, either by those who purposely came to Bristol, to inquire concerning this strange work, or by his old or new correspondents, *How can these things be?* And innumerable cautions were given him, (generally grounded on gross misrepresentations of things,) "Not to regard visions or dreams; or to fancy people had remission of sins, because of their cries, or tears, or bare outward professions." To one who had many times written to him on this head, the sum of his answer was as follows:

"The question between us turns chiefly, if not wholly, on matter of fact. You deny, That God does now work these effects: at least, that he works them in this manner. I affirm both; because I have heard these things with my own ears, and seen them with my eyes. I have seen, (as far as a thing of this kind can be seen,) very many persons changed from the spirit of fear, horror, despair, to the spirit of love, joy, and peace; and from sinful desire, till then reigning over them, to a pure desire of doing the will of God. These are matters of fact, whereof I have been, and almost daily am, an eye or ear-witness. And that such a change was then wrought, appears, (not from their shedding tears only, or falling into fits, or crying out: these are not the fruits, as you seem to suppose, whereby I judge, but,) from the whole tenor of their life, till then, many ways wicked; from that time, holy, just, and good.

"I will shew you him that was a lion till then, and is now a lamb: him that was a drunkard, and is now exemplarily sober: the whoremonger that was, who now abhors the very garment spotted by the flesh. These are my living arguments for what I assert, viz. 'That God does now, as aforetime, give remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, even to us, and to our children: yea, and that often suddenly.' If it be not so, I am found a false witness before God. For these things I do, and by his grace will testify."

But some said, "These were purely natural effects; the people fainted away, only because of the heat and closeness of the rooms." And others were sure, "It was all a cheat: they might help it if they would. Else, why were these things only in their private Societies? Why were they not done in the face of the sun?" "To-day, Monday 21, our Lord," says he, "answered for himself. For, while I was enforcing these words, 'Be still, and know that I am God,' he began to work, not in a close room, neither in private, but in the open air, and before more than two thousand witnesses. One, and another, and another, were struck to the earth, trembling exceedingly at the presence of his power. Others cried, with a loud and bitter cry, 'What must we do to be saved?' And, in less than an hour, seven persons, wholly unknown to me till that time, were rejoicing and singing, and, with all their might, giving thanks to the God of their salvation."

Notwithstanding all the encouragement he met with, it appears that he had frequently many uneasy thoughts concerning this unusual manner of administering among the people. But, after frequently laying the matter before God in prayer, and calmly weighing whatever objections he heard against it, he could not but adhere to what he had some time before written to a friend, who had freely spoken his sentiments concerning it. An extract of that letter is here subjoined, that the whole may be placed in a clear light.

"Dear Sir,

"The best return I can make for the kind freedom you use, is to use the same to you. O may the God whom we serve sanctify it to us both, and teach us the whole truth as it is in Jesus!

"As to your advice, 'That I should settle in College,' I have no business there, having now no office, and no pupils. And whether the other branch of your proposal be expedient for me, viz. 'To accept of a cure of souls,' it will be time enough to consider, when one is offered to me.

"But in the mean time, you think, 'I ought to sit still; because, otherwise, I should invade another's office, if I interfered with other people's business, and intermeddled with souls that did not belong to me.' You accordingly ask, 'How is it that I assemble Christians who are none of my charge, to sing psalms, and pray, and hear the Scriptures expounded: and think it hard to justify doing this in other men's parishes, upon Catholic principles?'

"Permit me to speak plainly. If by Catholic principles, you mean any other than Scriptural, they weigh nothing with me: I allow no other rule, whether of faith or practice, than the Holy Scriptures. But, on Scriptural principles, I do not think it hard to justify whatever I do. God in Scripture commands me, according to my power, to instruct the ignorant, reform the wicked, confirm the virtuous. Man forbids me to do this, in another's parish; that is, in effect, to do it at all; seeing I have now no parish of my own, nor probably ever shall have. Whom then shall I hear? God or man? 'If it be just to obey man rather than God, judge you. A dispensation of the gospel is committed to me, and woe is me, if I preach not the gospel.' But where shall I preach it upon the principles you mention? Why, not in Europe, Asia, Africa, or America: not in any of the Christian parts, at least, of the habitable earth. For all these are, after a sort, divided into parishes. If it be said, 'Go back then to the Heathens from whence you came.' Nay, but neither could I now, (on your principles) preach to them. For all the Heathens in Georgia belong to the parish either of Savannah or Frederica.

"Suffer me now to tell you my principles in this matter. I look upon all the world as my parish; thus far I mean, that in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty, to declare unto all that are willing to hear the glad tidings of salvation. This is the work which I know God has called me to. And sure I am, that his blessing attends it. Great encouragement have I therefore to be faithful, in fulfilling the work he hath given me to do. His servant I am, and as such am employed, (glory be to him) day and night in his service. I am employed according to the plain direction of his word, 'As I have opportunity to do good unto all men.' And his providence clearly concurs with his word; which has disengaged me from all things else, that I might singly attend on this very thing, *and go about doing good.*

"If you ask, 'How can this be? How can one do good, of whom *men say all manner of evil?*' I will put you in mind, (though you once knew this, yea, and much established me in that great truth,) the more evil men say of me for my Lord's sake, the more good he will do by me. That it is for his sake I know, and he knoweth, and the event agreeth thereto; for he mightily confirms the words I speak, by the Holy Ghost given unto those that hear them. O my friend, my heart is moved toward you. I fear, you have herein made shipwreck of the faith. I fear, *Satan, transformed into an angel of light*, hath assaulted you, and prevailed also. I fear, that offspring of hell, worldly prudence, has drawn you away from the simplicity of the gospel. How else could you ever conceive, That the being reviled and *hated of all men*, should make us less fit for our Master's service? How else could you ever think, of *saving yourself, and them that hear you*, without being *the filth and offscouring of the world?* To this hour, is this scripture true. And I therein rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. Blessed be God, I enjoy the reproach of Christ! O may you also be vile, exceedingly vile for his sake! God forbid that you should ever be other than generally scandalous. I had almost said, universally. If any man tell you, there is a new way of following Christ, *he is a liar, and the truth is not in him.* I am, &c."

Wednesday, 13. He returned to London, and next day went with Mr. Whitefield to Blackheath, where, it was supposed, between twelve and fourteen thousand people were assembled. Mr. Whitefield desiring him to preach, he consented, (although, he says, nature recoiled,) and spoke from, what he calls his favourite subject, *Jesus Christ, made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.*

He now laboured in London, and Bristol, and the intermediate and adjacent places. In Moorfields, Kennington-Common, Blackheath, &c. many thousands attended his ministry. In every place God bore witness to his truth. Multitudes were convinced, *that the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord:* and they brought forth fruits meet for repentance; and not a few found *redemption through his blood*, the *forgiveness of their sins.*

Various and strange were the reports, that were now in circulation concerning him. But the most common rumour was, That he was a *Jesuit*, and had evil designs against the church, if not also against the state. Various also were the publications respecting him. Most of them lived but a few days or weeks, the writers being totally ignorant of the subject they wrote upon. Some of them, however, were not unworthy of notice, and these he answered with great ability. A serious Clergyman, convinced of his uprightness, but yet staggered at a conduct, which he thought contrary to the interests of the Established Church, desired to know in what points he differed from the Church of England? "I answered," says Mr. Wesley, "to the best of my knowledge, in none: the doctrines we preach, are the doctrines of the Church of England; indeed, the fundamental doctrines thereof, clearly laid down, in her prayers, articles, and homilies.

"He asked, In what points then do you differ from the other Clergy of the Church of England? I answered, In none, from that part of the Clergy, who adhere to the doctrines of the Church: but from that part of the Clergy, who dissent from the Church, (though they own it not,) I differ in the points following:

" First. They speak of justification, either as the same thing with sanctification, or, as something consequent upon it. I believe justification to be wholly distinct from sanctification, and necessarily antecedent to it.

" Secondly. They speak of our own holiness or good works, as the cause of our justification; or, that for the *sake of which*, or *on account of which*, we are justified before God. I believe neither our own holiness, nor good works, are any part of the cause of our justification, but that the death and righteousness of Christ are the whole and sole cause of it: or that, for the sake of which, or on account of which, we are justified before God.

" Thirdly. They speak of good works, as a condition of justification, necessarily previous to it. I believe no good work, (strictly speaking) can be previous to justification, nor consequently a condition of it: but that we are justified by faith only, faith preceded, however, by repentance, and producing all good works.

" Fourthly. They speak of sanctification, or holiness, as if it were an outward thing, as if it consisted chiefly, if not wholly, in these two points. 1. Doing no harm. 2. The doing good, (as it is called,) i. e. the using the means of grace, and helping our neighbour. I believe it to be chiefly an inward thing, namely, *The life of God in the soul of man; a participation of the divine nature; the mind that was in Christ;* or, *the renewal of our heart after the image of* HIM, *that created us.*

" Lastly. They speak of the *New-Birth*, as an outward thing, as if it were no more than Baptism; or, at most, a change from outward wickedness, to outward goodness; from a vicious, to, what is called, a virtuous life. I believe it to be an inward thing; a change from inward wickedness, to inward goodness: an entire change of our inmost nature, from the image of the devil, to the image of God; a change from the love of the Creature, to the love of the Creator; from earthly and sensual, to heavenly and holy affections: in a word, from the tempers of the spirits of darkness, to those of the Angels of God in heaven.

"There is, therefore, a wide, essential, fundamental, irreconcilable difference between us: so that, if they speak the truth as it is in Jesus, I am found a false witness before God. But if I teach the way of God in truth, they *are blind leaders of the blind.*"

The word spoken now began to make a rapid progress. Societies were formed, not only in London and Bristol, but in many adjacent places: and some even at a considerable distance. The labourers as yet were few; but believing they were engaged in the cause of God, against ignorance and profaneness, which over-spread the land, they were indefatigable, scarcely giving themselves any rest day or night. The effects of their preaching made such noise, as at length roused some of the sleeping watchmen of *Israel:* not indeed to inquire after the truth, and amend their ways; but to crush these irregular proceedings. These opponents, however, had more zeal against Methodism, than knowledge of it. They attacked it with nothing but idle stories, misrepresentations of facts, and gross falsehoods. They retailed these from the pulpits, and published them from the press, with little regard to moderation, charity, or even *decency.* This brought more disgrace upon themselves, than on the Methodists; who, finding they were assailed only with such kind of weapons, conceived a higher opinion of the cause in which they were engaged, and profited by the attack. One instance of this kind, among many others that occurred about this time, Mr. Wesley speaks of as follows; "Having a *caution* against religious delusion put into my hands, I thought it my duty to write to the Author of it, which I did in the following terms:

"Reverend Sir,

"You charge me, (for I am called a Methodist, and consequently included within your charge,) with *vain and confident boastings, rash uncharitable censures, damning all who do not feel what I feel; with denying men the use of God's creatures which he hath appointed to be received with thanksgiving, and encouraging abstinence, prayer, and other religious exercises, to the neglect of the duties of our station.* O Sir, can you prove this charge upon me? The Lord shall judge in that day!

2. "I do indeed go out into the highways and hedges to call poor sinners to Christ. But not *in a tumultuous manner,* not *to the disturbance of the public peace, nor the predjudice of families.* Neither herein do I break any law which I know: much less *set at naught all rule and authority.* Nor can I be said to *intrude into the labours* of those, who do not labour at all; but suffer thousands of those for whom Christ died, to *perish for lack of knowledge.*

3. "They perish for want of knowing, That we, as well as the Heathens, *are alienated from the life of God:* that *every one of us,* by the corruption of our inmost nature, *is very far gone from original righteousness;* so far, that all our tempers, words,

and works, in our natural state, are only evil continually. So that *our* coming to Christ, as well as *their's, must infer a great and mighty change.* It must infer, not only an outward change, from stealing, lying, and all corrupt communication; but a thorough change of heart, an inward renewal in the spirit of our mind. Accordingly, the old man implies much more than an *outward evil conversation*, even an *evil heart of unbelief*, corrupted by pride and a thousand deceitful lusts. Of consequence, the new man must imply much more than an *outward good conversation*, even a *good heart, which after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness:* a heart full of that faith, which, working by love, produces all holiness of conversation.

4. " The change from the former of these states to the latter, is what I call *The New Birth*. But you say, I am *not content with this plain and easy notion of it, but fill myself and others, with fantastical conceits* about it. Alas, Sir, how can you prove this? And if you cannot prove it,—what amends can you make, either to God or to me, or to the world, for publickly asserting a gross falsehood?

6. " Now this New Birth, it is certain a man may want, although he can truly say, ' I am chaste, I am sober, I am just in all my dealings, I help my neighbour, and use the ordinances of God.' And, however such a man may have behaved in these respects, he is not to think well of his own state, till he experiences something within himself, which he has not yet experienced, but which he may be before-hand assured he shall experience, if he earnestly seek it, since the promises of God are true. That something is a living faith: ' A sure trust and confidence in God,

that by the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of God.' And from this will spring many other things, which till then he experienced not, as, the love of God shed abroad in his heart, the peace of God which passeth all understanding, and joy in the Holy Ghost, joy though not unfelt, yet unspeakable and full of glory.

7. "These are some of those *inward fruits of the Spirit*, which must be felt, wheresoever they are: and without these, I cannot learn from holy writ, that any man is *born of the Spirit.* I beseech you, Sir, by the mercies of God, that if as yet you *know nothing of such inward feelings*, if you do not *feel in yourself these mighty workings of the Spirit of Christ*, at least you would not contradict and blaspheme. When the Holy Ghost hath fervently kindled your love towards God, you will know these to be very sensible operations. 'As you hear the wind, and feel it too, while it strikes upon your bodily organs,' you will know you are under the guidance of God's Spirit by *feeling it in your own soul;* by the present peace, and joy, and love, which you feel within, as well as by its outward and more distant effects. I am, &c."

A pious and moderate Clergyman, perceiving that attacks, like that above mentioned, could do no good to the cause of Mr. Wesley's opponents, published a few rules to direct the assailants in their future attempts to stop the increasing innovations, in a discourse concerning enthusiasm, or religious delusion. He speaks as follows:

"A Minister of our Church, who may look upon it as his duty to warn his parishioners, or an Author who may think it necessary to caution his readers against such Preachers, or their doctrine, (Enthusiastic Preachers, I suppose, such as, he takes it for granted, the Methodist Preachers were,) ought to be very careful to act with a Christian spirit, and to advance nothing but with temper, charity, and truth. —Perhaps the following rules may be proper to be observed by them :

1. " Not to blame persons for doing that now, which Scripture records holy men of old to have practised, lest, had they lived in those times, they should have condemned them also.

2. " Not to censure persons, in Holy Orders, for teaching the same doctrines which are taught in Scripture, and by our Church ; lest they should ignorantly censure, what they profess to defend.

3. " Not to censure any professed members of our church, who live good lives, for resorting to religious assemblies in private houses, to perform in Society acts of divine worship ; when the same seems to have been practiced by the Primitive Christians ; and when, alas ! there are so many parishes, where a person, piously disposed, has no opportunity of joining in the public service of our church, more than one hour and a half in a week.

4. " Not to condemn those who are constant attendants on the communion and service of our church, if they sometimes use other prayers in private assemblies : since the best Divines of our church have composed and published many prayers, that have not the sanction of public authority ; which implies a general consent, that our church has not made provision for every private occasion.

5. " Not to establish the power of working miracles as the great criterion of a divine mission ; when

Scripture teaches us, that the agreement of doctrines with truth, as taught in those Scriptures, is the only infallible rule.

6. "Not to drive any away from our church, by opprobriously calling them Dissenters; or treating them as such, so long as they keep to her communion.

7. "Not lightly to take up with silly stories that may be propagated, to the discredit of persons of a general good character.

"I do not lay down," says he, "these negative rules, so much for the sake of any persons whom the unobservance of them would immediately injure, as of our church, and her professed defenders. For churchmen, however well-meaning, would lay themselves open to censure, and might do her irretrievable damage, by a behaviour contrary to them."

Mr. Wesley often wished, that they who either preached or wrote against him, would seriously attend to these rules. But these rules were too liberal and candid for the common herd of opposers.

A few months after this, Mr. Wesley received the following excellent letter from the author of the above-mentioned reflections:

"Reverend Sir,

"As I wrote the Rules and Considerations, (in No. 25, of Country Common-Sense,) with an eye to Mr. Whitefield, yourself, and your opposers, from a sincere desire to do some service to christianity, according to the imperfect notion I had at that time of the real merits of the cause: I at the same time resolved, to take any opportunity that should offer for my better information.

"On this principle it was, that I made one of your audience, October 23, at Bradford. And, because I thought I could form the best judgment of you and your doctrines, from your sermon, I resolved to hear that first: which was the reason, that although, by accident, I was at the same house, and walked two miles with you, to the place you preached at, I spoke little or nothing to you. I must confess, Sir, that the discourse you made that day, wherein you pressed your hearers in the closest manner, and with the authority of a true minister of the gospel, not to stop at *faith only*, but to add to it *all virtues*, and to shew forth their faith, by every kind of *good works*, convinced me of the great wrong done you by a public report common in people's mouth, That you preach faith without works. For, that is the only ground of prejudice which any true christian can have: and is the sense in which your adversaries would take your words, when they censure them. For, that we are justified by faith only, is the doctrine of Jesus Christ, the doctrine of his Apostles, and the doctrine of the Church of England. I am ashamed that after having lived twenty-nine years, since my baptism into this faith,—I should speak of it in the lame, unfaithful, I may say, false manner I have done in the paper above mentioned! What mere darkness is man, when truth hideth her face from him!

" Man is by nature a sinner, the child of the devil, under God's wrath, in a state of damnation. The Son of God took pity on this our misery: he made himself man, he made himself sin for us; that is, He hath borne the punishment of our sin, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed. To receive this boundless mercy, this inestimable benefit, we must have faith in our

Benefactor, and through him in God.—But then, true faith is not a lifeless principle, as your adversaries seem to understand it. They and you mean two quite different things by faith. They mean, a bare believing, that Jesus is the Christ. You mean a living, growing, purifying principle, which is the root both of inward and outward holiness; both of purity and good works: without which, no man can have faith, at least no other than a dead faith.

"This, Sir, you explained in your sermon at Bradford, Sunday, October 28, to near ten thousand people, who all stood to hear you, with awful silence and great attention. I have since reflected how much good the Clergy might do, if, instead of shunning, they would come to hear and converse with you; and in their churches and parishes, would farther enforce those Catholic doctrines which you preach: and which, I am glad to see, have such a surprising good effect, on great numbers of souls.

"I think, indeed, too many Clergymen are culpable, in that they do not inform themselves better, of Mr. W——d, yourself, and your doctrines, from your own mouths: I am persuaded, if they did this with a Christian spirit, the differences between you would soon be at an end. Nay, I think, those whose flocks resort so much to hear you, ought to do it, out of their pastoral duty to them; that if you preach good doctrine, they may edify them, on the impressions so visibly made by your sermons, or if evil, they may reclaim them from error.—

"I shall conclude this letter with putting you in mind, in all your sermons, writings, and practice, nakedly to follow the naked Jesus; I mean, to preach the pure doctrine of the gospel, without respect of persons or things. Many Preachers, many Reformers, many Missionaries, have fallen by not observing this; by not having continually in mind, 'Whosoever shall break the least of these commandments, and teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven.'"

"August 27," says Mr. Wesley, "for two hours I took up my cross, in arguing with a zealous man, and labouring to convince him, 'That I was not an enemy to the Church of England.' He allowed, 'I taught no other doctrines than those of the church;' but could not forgive my teaching them *out of the church walls*. He allowed too, (which none indeed can deny who has either any regard to truth, or sense of shame) that 'by this teaching, many souls, who till that time were perishing for lack of knowledge, have been, and are, brought from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.' But he added, 'No one can tell, what *may be hereafter*: and therefore I say, these things ought not to be suffered.'"

Are not many still of the same mind? Do they not think, because they cannot tell *what may be hereafter*, and what consequences may result from this manner of preaching the gospel, that therefore none ought to be suffered thus to preach it? but that all should be compelled to let their fellow-creatures, for whom CHRIST died, still remain in darkness, and continue to perish *for lack of knowledge*!!

We have seen above what great encouragement, and how much assistance Mr. Wesley received, in his pious course, from the letters, and advice of his mother. It seems, nevertheless, that it was not till within a few years of her death that she was fully assured of her acceptance with God.

"Monday, Sept. 3," says he, "I talked largely with my mother, who told me, That till a short time since, she had scarce heard such a thing mentioned, as having forgiveness of sins now, or God's Spirit bearing witness with our spirit: much less did she imagine, that this was the common privilege of all true believers. 'Therefore,' said she, 'I never durst ask for it myself. But two or three weeks ago, while my son Hall was pronouncing those words, in delivering the cup to me, *The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee:* the words struck through my heart; and I knew God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven me all my sins.'

"I asked: Whether her father (Dr. Annesley) had not the same faith? And, Whether she had not heard him preach it to others? She answered, 'He had it himself, and declared a little before his death, that for more than forty years, he had had no darkness, no fear, no doubt at all, of his being *accepted in the Beloved.* But that nevertheless, she did not remember to have heard him preach, no not once, explicitly upon it; whence she supposed he also looked upon it as the peculiar blessing of a few, not as promised to all the people of God.'"

The reader will expect to be informed how this excellent woman, in whose happiness he must feel himself interested, finished her earthly course. Of this we have an account, in the following words of Mr. Wesley.

"July 18, 1742, I left Bristol in the evening, and on Tuesday came to London. I found my mother on the borders of eternity. But she had no doubt nor fear: nor any desire but, (as soon as God should call) to *depart, and to be with Christ.*

" Friday 30. About three in the afternoon, I went to my mother, and found her change was near. I sat down on the bed-side. She was in her last conflict; unable to speak, but I believe quite sensible. Her look was calm and serene, and her eyes fixed upward, while we commended her soul to God. From three to four, the silver cord was loosing, and the wheel breaking at the cistern. And then, without any struggle, or sigh, or groan, the soul was set at liberty. We stood round the bed, and fulfilled her last request, uttered a little before she lost her speech, 'Children, as soon as I am released, sing a psalm of praise to God.'

" Sunday, August 1. Almost an innumerable company being gathered together, about five in the afternoon, I committed to the earth, the body of my mother, to sleep with her fathers. The portion of Scripture, from which I afterwards spoke, was, 'I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it; from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened.—And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.' It was one of the most solemn assemblies I ever saw, or expect to see on this side eternity.

" We set up a plain stone at the head of her grave, inscribed with the following words:

'Here lies the body of Mrs. Susannah Wesley, the youngest and last surviving daughter of Dr. Samuel Annesley.'

'In sure and steadfast Hope to rise
And claim her Mansion in the Skies,
A Christian

A Christian here her Flesh laid down,
The Cross exchanging for a Crown.

True Daughter of Affliction she,
Inur'd to pain and misery,
Mourn'd a long Night of griefs and fears,
A legal Night of Seventy Years.

The Father then reveal'd his Son,
Him in the broken bread made known.
She knew and felt her Sins forgiven,
And found the Earnest of her Heaven.

Meet for the Fellowship above,
She heard the call, *Arise, my Love:*
I come, her dying looks replied,
And lamb-like as her Lord, she died.'

" I cannot but further observe," adds Mr. Wesley, " that even she, (as well as her father and grandfather, her husband, and her three sons) had been, in her measure and degree, a preacher of righteousness. This I learned from a letter, written long since to my father; part of which I have here subjoined.

" Feb. 6, 1711-12.

" —— As I am a woman, so I am also mistress of a large family. And though the superior charge of the souls contained in it, lies upon you,—yet in your absence, I cannot but look upon every soul you leave under my care, as a talent committed to me under a trust, by the great Lord of all the families, both of heaven and earth. And if I am unfaithful to him or you, in neglecting to improve these talents, how shall I answer unto Him, when He shall command me, to render an account of my stewardship?

" As these and other such like thoughts, made me at first take a more than ordinary care of the souls of my children and servants; so knowing our religion requires a strict observation of the Lord's day, and not thinking that we fully answered the end of the institution, by going to church, unless we filled up the intermediate spaces of time by other acts of piety and devotion: I thought it my duty to spend some part of the day, in reading to, and instructing, my family.—And such time I esteemed spent in a way more acceptable to God, than if I had retired to my own private devotions.

" This was the beginning of my present practice. Other people's coming in, and joining with us, was merely accidental. Our lad told his parents: they first desired to be admitted: then others, that heard of it, begged leave also. So our company increased to about thirty: and it seldom exceeded forty last winter.—

" But soon after you went to London last, I lit on the account of the Danish Missionaries. I was, I think, never more affected with any thing.—I could not forbear spending good part of that evening, in praising and adoring the divine goodness, for inspiring them with such ardent zeal for his glory.—For several days I could think or speak of little else. At last it came into my mind, Though I am not a man nor a minister, yet if my heart were sincerely devoted to God, and I were inspired with a true zeal for his glory, I might do somewhat more than I do. I thought, I might pray more for them, and might speak to those with whom I converse with more warmth of affection. I resolved to begin with my own children; with whom I observe the following method. I take such a proportion of time as I can spare every night, to discourse with each child apart.

" With those few neighbours that then came to me, I discoursed more freely and affectionately. I chose the best and most awakening sermons we have. And I spent somewhat more time with them in such exercises, without being careful about the success of my undertaking. Since this, our company increased every night. For I dare deny none that ask admittance.

" Last Sunday I believe we had above two hundred. And yet many went away, for want of room to stand.

" We banish all temporal concerns from our Society. None are suffered to mingle any discourse about them, with our reading or singing. We keep close to the business of the day, and when it is over, all go home.

" I cannot conceive, why any should reflect upon *you*, because your wife endeavours to draw people to the Church, and to restrain them from profaning the Lord's-day, by reading to them, and other persuasions. For my part, I value no censure upon this account. I have long since shook hands with the world. And I heartily wish, I had never given them more reason to speak against me.

" As to its looking particular, I grant it does. And so does almost any thing that is serious, or that may any way advance the glory of God, or the salvation of souls.—

" As for your proposal, of letting some other person read; alas! You do not consider what a people these are. I do not think one man among them could read a sermon, without spelling a good part of it. Nor has any of our family a voice strong enough, to be heard by such a number of people.—

"But there is one thing about which I am much dissatisfied: that is, Their being present at family prayers. I do not speak of any concern I am under, barely because so *many* are present. For those who have the honour of speaking to the Great and Holy God, need not be ashamed to speak before the whole world: but because of my sex, I doubt, if it is proper for *me*, to present the prayers of the people to God. Last Sunday I would fain have dismissed them before prayers; but they begged so earnestly to stay, I durst not deny them."

The few traits I have given of this Lady, are sufficient to discover her genuine character. She was a woman of sound understanding, and great penetration. She possessed a single eye: she inquired after truth, and followed it, wherever she found it. Her resolution was unshaken: the smiles and frowns of the world, she trod under her feet; but, at the same time, discovered the greatest caution in admitting any thing as true, which to her appeared novel. In some things she evidenced the soul of a Missionary; and therefore, was peculiarly qualified to reside with her son, whose high church principles might otherwise have induced him, as we shall see hereafter, to reject that assistance which the Lord afforded him, and which was so indispensably necessary to enable him to diffuse the savour and power of religion through this, and distant lands.

Mr. Wesley was now pressed to visit Wales, which he did about the middle of October. He preached in many places of that principality; and though the frost had set in, and was very severe, multitudes gladly heard him, even in the open air; and many turned to the Lord. Soon after, he also preached in many parts of Devonshire, where his ministry was attended with similar success: and, at the earnest invitation of Mr. Howel Harris, of Breconshire, made a second excursion to Wales. He continued, however, from time to time, his usual labours in and near Bristol, and sundry times visited London; where, on Sunday, Nov. 11, he preached for the first time, in a place which had been the King's foundry for cannon, a place which was long afterwards occupied by him, as a chapel and dwelling-house. Here he met his little Society, which rapidly increased, and declared the word of God to a large and attentive auditory.

His brother Samuel having died at Tiverton, Nov. 6, on the 15th, Messrs. John and Charles Wesley set out on a visit to their distressed sister. They came thither on the 21st, when Mr. Wesley writes as follows:

"My poor sister was sorrowing almost as one without hope. Yet we could not but rejoice, at hearing, from one who had attended my brother in all his weakness, that several days before he went hence, God had given him a calm and full assurance of his interest in Christ. O may every one who opposes it, be thus convinced, that this doctrine is of God!

"Saturday 24. We accepted an invitation to Exeter, from one who came thence to comfort my sister in her affliction. And on Sunday 25, (Mr. D. having desired the pulpit which was readily granted both for the morning and afternoon) I preached at St. Mary's, on 'The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.' Dr. W—— told me, after sermon, 'Sir, you must not preach in the afternoon. Not,' said he, 'that you preach any false doctrine. I allow, all that you have said is true: and it is the doctrine of the Church of England. But it is not guarded. It is dangerous. It may lead people into enthusiasm and despair.'

"I did not readily see, where the stress of this objection (so frequently started) lay. But upon a little reflection, I saw it plainly. The real state of the case is this. Religion is commonly thought to consist of three things, harmlessness, using the means of grace, and doing good, (as it is called) that is, helping our neighbours, chiefly by giving alms. Accordingly, by a religious man is commonly meant, one that is honest, just, and fair in his dealings; that is constantly at Church and Sacrament; and that gives much alms; or (as it is usually termed) does much good.

"Now, in explaining those words of the Apostle, *The kingdom of God*, (or true religion,) the consequence of God dwelling and reigning in the soul, *is not meat and drink*,—I was necessarily led to shew, that religion does not properly consist in any of all these three things: but that a man might both be harmless, use the means of grace, and do much good, and yet have no true religion at all. And sure it is, had God then impressed this great truth on any one, who before was ignorant of it, that impression would have occasioned such heaviness in his soul, as the world always terms despair.

"Again, in explaining those words, 'The kingdom of God, (or true religion) is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost:' I insisted, that every follower of Christ, ought to expect and pray for that peace of God which passeth all understanding, that rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, which is even now unspeakable and full of glory; and above all, (as being the very life and soul of religion, without which it is all dead show) the love of God shed abroad in his heart, by the Holy Ghost given unto him. But all this is 'enthusiasm from end to end,' to those who have the form of godliness, but not the power.

"I know, indeed, there is a way of explaining these texts, so that they shall mean just nothing: so that they shall express far less of inward religion, than the writings of Plato or Hierocles. And whoever guards them thus, (but God forbid I should do it,) will undoubtedly avoid all danger, of either driving people into this despair, or leading them into this enthusiasm."

At this time Mr. Wesley made the following remarks on the great work, which God had already wrought by his ministry.

"Such a work this hath been, in many respects, as neither we nor our fathers had known. Not a few whose sins were of the most flagrant kind, drunkards, swearers, thieves, whoremongers, adulterers, have been brought from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Many of these were rooted in their wickedness, having long gloried in their shame, perhaps for a course of many years, yea, even to hoary hairs. Many had not so much as a notional faith, being Jews, Arians, Deists, or Atheists. Nor has God only made bare his arm in these last days, in behalf of open Publicans and sinners; but many of the Pharisees also have believed on him, of the righteous that, as they thought, needed no repentance: and having received the sentence of death in themselves, have then heard the voice that raiseth the dead: have been made partakers of an inward, vital religion, even righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

"The manner wherein God hath wrought this work in many souls, is as strange as the work itself. It has generally, if not always, been wrought in one moment. As the lightning shining from heaven, so was the coming of the Son of Man, either to bring peace or a sword; either to wound or to heal, either to convince of sin, or to give remission of sins in his blood. And the other circumstances attending it, have been equally remote from what human wisdom would have expected. So true is that word, 'My ways are not as your ways, nor my thoughts as your thoughts.'

"These extraordinary circumstances seem to have been designed by God, for the further manifestation of his work, to cause his power to be known, and to awaken the attention of a drowsy world."

The truth of these remarks was especially evident among the Colliers at Kingswood, a people famous from the beginning hitherto, for neither fearing God nor regarding man. So ignorant of the fear of God were they, that they seemed but one remove from the beasts that perish. Indeed, they were a terror to the whole country round, and were as truly without the desire of instruction, as without the means of it.

Many used tauntingly to say of Mr. Whitefield, *If he will convert Heathens, why does he not go to the Colliers of Kingswood?* He did so. And as there were thousands, who resorted to no place of public

worship,

worship, he went after them, into their own wilderness, to *seek and to save that which was lost.* When he was called away, others went into the *highways and hedges, to compel them to come in.* And, by the grace of God, their labour was not in vain. The scene was now changed. Kingswood no longer resounded with cursing and blasphemy. It was no longer filled with wars and fightings, with clamour and bitterness, with wrath and envyings. Peace and love were there. Numbers of the people became mild and gentle, and easy to be entreated. They did *not cry, neither strive, and hardly was their voice heard in the streets:* or indeed in their own wood; unless when they were at their usual evening *diversion of singing praise unto God their Saviour.* In short, the change produced by the preaching of Mr. Wesley and others, was so great and sudden, as to excite universal attention and admiration.

And such was the state of religion and morality at this time, throughout the nation, that, among a vast majority of people, a similar change in their tempers and principles of action, was not less necessary to make them Christians, though the necessity of it might be less apparent. And what was done in Kingswood shews, what might have been done every where else, had the ministers of the Gospel been such men as their office required them to be, and applied themselves to the duties of it, with the same diligence that men are obliged to use in following their temporal affairs; which certainly is the least that can be required of a minister of the gospel. How will they meet Jesus Christ, without shame, confusion, and conscious guilt, who have filled the sacred office of instructing the people in the way of salvation, and have suffered them to *perish for lack of knowledge?* The time will come, when such men, of whatever denomination among Christians, will be fully convinced it had been better for them to have been common porters, than to have occupied the highest pastoral offices in the Church of God.

About this time a great number of these Colliers, who had been abandoned to every kind of wickedness even to a proverb, but were now become pious, and zealous for religion, came to the churches in Bristol, on a Lord's-day, for the benefit of the Sacrament. But most of the Bristol Ministers repelled them from the table, because they did not belong to their parishes. Setting religion aside, common humanity would have taught them to rejoice in so remarkable a reformation among these wretched people. But these *watchmen of Israel*, did not choose to have any increase of trouble. Can we wonder, that the Methodists had such great success in preaching the gospel to the middling and lower orders of people, when such ministers as these had the care of most of the parishes in England? The case, it is hoped, is now greatly altered. At present there is more religious knowledge, more candour, and greater attention to propriety of conduct, both among the Clergy and the people, than there was at that time: and the Methodists certainly have been the principal means of producing the change.

The reader has probably been informed how frequently the Colliers in Kingswood were wont to rise in mobs, and set all law and government at defiance. But to check such outrages also, the preaching of the Methodists had great influence. September 22, Mr. Charles Wesley was informed that the Colliers were risen; and, riding out from Bristol, he met about a thousand of them at Lawrence-Hill. The occasion of their rising was the dearness of corn. He went up to an eminence, and began to talk to them. Many seemed inclined to go back with him to the school, which some of the most desperate perceiving, they rushed violently upon the others, beating, tearing and driving them every way from Mr. Wesley. He adds, " I rode up to a ruffian, who was striking one of our Colliers,* and prayed him rather to strike me. He answered, ' No, not for all the world,' and was quite overcome. I turned upon another, who struck my horse, and he also sunk into a lamb. They now made one general assault, and the violent Colliers forced the quiet ones into the town. I seized one of the tallest, and earnestly besought him to follow me,—' Yes,' said he, ' that I will, all the world over.' I pressed about six into Christ's service. We met several parties, and stopped and exhorted them to follow us, and gleaning some from every company, we increased as we marched on to the school. From one till three o'clock, we spent in prayer, that evil might be prevented, and the lion chained. Then news was brought us, that the Colliers were returned in peace. They had walked quietly into the city, without sticks or the least violence. A few of the better sort of them went to the Mayor, and told their grievance. Then they all returned, as they came, without noise or disturbance. All who saw it, were amazed. Nothing could more clearly have shewn the change wrought among them, than this conduct on such an occasion.

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* He means a Collier, who was in the Methodist Society.

" I found afterwards, that all the Colliers in our Society had been forced away, to a man. Having learned of Christ not to resist evil, they went a mile with those that compelled them, rather than free themselves by violence. One man the rioters dragged out of his sick-bed, and threw him into the fish-ponds. They threatened to bury others alive, by filling up the pits, if they would not come up and bear them company." It was a happy circumstance, that they forced so many of the Methodist Colliers to go with them: as these, by their example and advice, restrained the savage fury of the others. This, undoubtedly, was the true cause why they all returned, without making any disturbance.

SECTION V.

OF THE SEPARATION BETWEEN MR. WESLEY AND MR. WHITEFIELD; AND THE INTRODUCTION OF LAY-PREACHERS INTO THE WORK.

HITHERTO Mr. Whitefield had laboured in union and harmony with Mr. Wesley, and his brother. They preached in the same pulpits, and had only one common design, to promote Christian knowledge, and a holy conversation among the people, without entering into the discussions of particular opinions. But Mr. Whitefield, on his second visit to America, being well received by many pious ministers in the northern States, who were of Calvin's sentiments, and asserted absolute Predestination, and being edified by their piety, began also in a little time to relish their creed. They strongly recommended to him the writings of the Puritan Divines, which he, from that time, read with much pleasure, approving all he found therein, as he informed Mr. Wesley, in a letter which he wrote to him on the subject.

On the other hand, Mr. Wesley believed and asserted, that God *is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.* And though the Calvinistic sentiments had been long held by a great part of the dissenting congregations, yet they did not appear, for some time, among those who were converted in the present revival of religion.

Controversy between good men is commonly on some speculative opinion, while they are perfectly at unison with respect to the essential points of religion, and the duties of morality. And the controversy almost always injures the Christian temper, much more than it promotes the interest of speculative truth. On this occasion, a separation took place between Mr. Wesley and Mr. Whitefield, so far that they had different places of worship: and some warm and tart expressions dropped from each. But their good opinion of each other's integrity, and usefulness, founded on long and intimate acquaintance, could not be destroyed by such a difference of sentiment; and their mutual affection was only obscured by a cloud for a season.

Mr. Whitefield, in his last Will, written with his own hand, about six months before he died, says, "I leave a mourning ring to my honoured and dear friends, and disinterested fellow-labourers, the Rev. Messrs. John and Charles Wesley, in token of my indissoluble union with them, in heart and christian affection, notwithstanding our difference in judgment about some particular points of doctrine.* When the news of Mr. Whitefield's death reached London, Mr. Keen, one of his executers, recollecting he had often said to him, "If you should die abroad whom shall we get to preach your funeral Sermon? Must it be your old friend, the Rev. Mr. J. Wesley?" And having constantly received for answer, "He is the man;" Mr. Keen accordingly waited on Mr. John Wesley, and engaged him to preach it; which he did, and bore ample testimony to the undissembled piety, and the ardent zeal, and the extensive usefulness, of his much beloved and honoured friend.†

Mr. Wesley now went on with his labours, and multitudes, as before, attended his ministry, many of whom, renouncing all ungodliness, were brought into the glorious liberty of the gospel. Many also were the witnesses, who, after patiently suffering the afflictions, which the Lord was pleased to lay upon them, resigned their souls into the hands of God, with triumphant praise and joy.

But, as the people who placed themselves under his care, daily increased, he was involved in a considerable difficulty. Either he must confine his labours to those whom he could visit constantly, or in a short space of time, or endeavour to procure some other assistance for them. It seems he at first had some hopes that the Ministers of the respective parishes, would watch over those who were lately turned from the error of their ways. In this, however, he was disappointed; which induced him to try other methods, and at last drew forth that defence of himself, which he makes in the third part of his *Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion.*

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* See Robert's Life of Mr. Whitefield, Page 256.

† Ibid. Page 230. Mr. Whitefield died in Sept. 1770.

“ It pleased God by two or three Ministers of the Church of England, to call many sinners to repentance; who, in several parts, were undeniably turned from a course of sin, to a course of holiness.

“ The Ministers of the places where this was done, ought to have received those Ministers with open arms: and to have taken them, who had just begun to serve God, into their peculiar care; watching over them in tender love, lest they should fall back into the snare of the devil.

“ Instead of this, the greater part spoke of those Ministers, as if the devil, not God, had sent them. Some repelled them from the Lord's Table: others stirred up the people against them, representing them, even in their public discourses, as *Fellows not fit to live:* Papists, Heretics, Traitors, Conspirators against their King and Country.

“ And how did they watch over the sinners lately reformed? Even as a leopard watcheth over his prey. They drove some of them also from the Lord's Table; to which, till now, they had had no desire to approach. They preached all manner of evil concerning them, openly cursing them in the name of the Lord. They turned many out of their work; persuaded others to do so too, and harassed them all manner of ways.

“ The event was, that some of them were wearied out, and so turned back to their vomit again. And then these good Pastors gloried over them, and endeavoured to shake others by their example.

“ When the Ministers by whom God had helped them before, came again to those places, great part of their work was to begin again; if it could be begun again: but the relapsers were often so hardened in sin, that no impression could be made upon them.

"What could they do in a case of so extreme necessity? Where so many souls lay at stake?

"No clergyman would assist at all. The expedient that remained was, to find some one among themselves, who was upright of heart, and of sound judgment in the things of God: and to desire him to meet the rest as often as be could, in order to confirm them, as he was able, in the ways of God, either by reading to them, or by prayer, or by exhortation.

"God immediately gave a blessing hereto. In several places, by means of these plain men, not only those who had already begun to run well, were hindered from drawing back to perdition; but other sinners also, from time to time, were converted from the error of their ways.

"This plain account of the whole proceeding, I take to be the best defence of it. I know no scripture which forbids making use of such help, in a case of such necessity. And I praise God who has given even this help to those poor sheep, when *their own Shepherds pitied them not.*"

The want of assistance of this kind, was greatly felt in London. The Society in that city had recently and deeply experienced, the mischievous effects of that instruction, which is not according to the oracles of God. And therefore when Mr. Wesley was about to leave London, for a season, he appointed one, whom he judged to be strong in faith, and of an exemplary conversation, to meet the Society at the usual times, to pray with them, and give them such advice as might be needful. This was Mr. Maxfield, who being fervent in spirit, and *mighty in the Scriptures*, greatly profited the people. They crowded to hear him: and by the increase of their number, as well as by their earnest and deep attention, they insensibly led him to go further than he at first designed. He began to preach: and the Lord so blessed the Word, that many were not only deeply awakened, and brought to repentance, but were also made happy in a consciousness of pardon. The Scripture marks of true conversion, inward peace, and power to walk in all holiness, evinced the work to be of God.

The late Countess Dowager of Huntingdon, was at this time, and for many years after, exceedingly attached to Mr. Wesley, and very frequently wrote to him. She heard Mr. Maxfield expound, and in a letter to Mr. Wesley, speaks thus of him; "I never mentioned to you, that I have seen Maxfield. He is one of the greatest instances of God's peculiar favour, that I know. God has raised from the stones, one to sit among the princes of his people.—He is my astonishment.—How is God's power shewn in weakness. You can have no idea what an attachment I have to him. He is highly favoured of the Lord. The first time I made him expound, expecting little from him, I sat over against him, and thought, what a power of God must be with him, to make me give any attention to him. But before he had gone over one fifth part, any one that had seen me, would have thought me made of wood or stone, so quite immovable, I both felt and looked. His power in prayer is very extraordinary. To deal plainly, I could talk for an hour about him. The Society goes on well here. Live assured of the most faithful and sincere friendship of your unworthy sister in Christ Jesus. "SELINA HUNTINGDON."

Some, however, were offended at the irregularity, as it was termed, of a Lay-man preaching. A complaint was made in form to Mr. Wesley, and he hastened to London, in order to put a stop to it. His mother then lived in his house, adjoining the Foundry. When he arrived, she perceived that his countenance was expressive of dissatisfaction, and inquired the cause. "Thomas Maxfield," said he abruptly "has turned Preacher, I find." She looked attentively at him, and replied, "John, you know what my sentiments have been. You cannot suspect me of favouring readily any thing of this kind. But take care what you do with respect to that young man, for he is as surely called of God to preach, as you are. Examine what have been the fruits of his preaching: and hear him also yourself." He did so. His prejudice bowed before the force of truth, and he could only say, "*It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good.*"

In other places also the same assistance was afforded. It appears, indeed, from what he hath said at various times, that he only *submitted with reluctance to it*. His high church principles stood in his way. But such effects were produced, that he frequently found himself in the predicament of Peter, who being questioned in a matter somewhat similar, could only relate the fact, and say, "*What was I, that I could withstand God?*"

But the Lord was about to shew him still greater things than these. An honest man, a Mason of Birstal, in Yorkshire, whose name was John Nelson, coming up to London, to work at his trade, heard that Word, which he found to be the *power of God unto salvation.* His understanding was informed, his conscience awakened, and feeling the whole energy of the truths he heard delivered, he received that peace, which the Apostle speaks of, as the fruit of justifying faith, he received a knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins.

He had full business in London and large wages. But from the time of his finding peace with God, it was continually upon his mind, That he must return, (though he knew not why) to his native place. He did so, about Christmas, in the year 1740. His relations and acquaintance soon began to inquire, "What he thought of this new faith?" And whether he believed, There was any such thing as a man's knowing that his sins were forgiven? John told them point blank, That "this new faith, as they called it, was the old faith of the Gospel: and that he himself was as sure his sins were forgiven, as he could be of the shining of the sun." This was soon noised abroad; more and more came to inquire, concerning these strange things. Some put him upon the proof of the great truths, which such inquiries naturally led him to mention. And thus he was brought unawares to quote, explain, compare, and enforce several parts of Scripture. This he did at first, sitting in his house, till the company increased so that the house could not contain them. Then he stood at the door, which he was commonly obliged to do, in the evening, as soon as he came from work. God immediately set his seal to what was spoken: and several believed, and therefore declared, That God was merciful also to their unrighteousness, and had forgiven all their sins.

Mr. Ingham hearing of this, came to Birstal, inquired into the facts, talked with John himself, and examined him with the closest exactness, both touching his knowledge and spiritual experience. After which, he encouraged him to proceed, and pressed him as often as he had opportunity, to come to any of the places where himself had been, and speak to the people as God should enable him.

Things being in this state, John Nelson invited Mr. Wesley to come down among them, and in May he arrived at Birstal. Here he found a Lay-Preacher who, undeniably had done much good. Many of the greatest profligates in all the country were now changed. Their blasphemies were turned to praise. The whole town wore a new face: such a change did God work, by the artless testimony of one plain man! Mr. Wesley was now so fully convinced of the great design of a preached Gospel, that if sinners were truly converted to God, and a decent order preserved in hearing the word, he thought it a matter of no consequence, whether the instrument of the good done, was a Lay-man, or regularly ordained. And if a regularly ordained Preacher did no good, and a Lay-man, by preaching, did; it was easy to judge which was acting most agreeably to the designs of the Gospel, and most for the benefit of society. It is probable that such reflections as these had risen in his mind on the fact before him; and his judgment was confirmed by repeated facts of the same kind, that occurred; and thus he was induced to make use of the labours of Lay-men, on a more extensive scale than had hitherto been allowed. And from this time the number of Lay-men employed gradually increased, in proportion to the increase of the Societies, and the want of Preachers; the Clergy in general, standing at a distance from a plan of such irregularity, as they judged it, and so much labour. Mr. John Nelson's Journal was afterwards published, and is now extant. And, it is hard to say, which is most to be admired, the strength of his understanding, unassisted by human learning, his zeal for the salvation of souls, or the injuries and oppressions he suffered from those, who knew not what spirit they were of.

From this time Mr. Wesley laboured much in Yorkshire. In no part of England has religion taken a deeper root, or had a wider spread, than in this favoured county. The people, who are numerous, are all industrious, and, in general, fully employed. They have learned to be "diligent in business, and fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." Not only in all the capital towns, but in most of the villages also, numerous Societies are formed, and Christian fellowship, till then unknown, has given religion a stability and beauty, which can hardly be conceived by those who know it not.

SECTION VI.

OF THE SUCCESS OF THE GOSPEL AMONG THE COLLIERS AND OTHERS, IN AND ABOUT NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, AND IN STAFFORDSHIRE, AND AMONG THE TINNERS IN CORNWALL, WITH THE PERSECUTIONS MR. WESLEY AND HIS FRIENDS ENDURED.

ABOUT a year before this, viz. in June 1741, Mr. Wesley had taken a journey as far as Nottingham, where he had preached in the Market-place, to an immense number of people. Being now as far north as Birstal near Leeds, he determined to go forward from thence to visit Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Having witnessed the success of the Gospel among the Colliers at Kingswood, he had long had a desire to visit those about Newcastle, and now accomplished his wish; at least in part, and made way for future visits. He was not known to any person of Newcastle; and therefore, he and Mr. J. Taylor, who travelled with him, put up at an inn. On walking through the town, after taking some refreshment, he observes: "I was surprised; so much drunkenness, cursing, and swearing, (even from the mouths of little children) do I never remember to have seen and heard before, in so small a compass of time. Surely this place is ripe for Him, who 'came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.'

"Sunday 30. At seven, I walked down to Sandgate, the poorest, and most contemptible part of the town, and standing at the end of the street with John Taylor, began to sing the hundredth psalm. Three

or

or four people came out to see what was the matter, who soon increased to four or five hundred. I suppose there might be twelve or fifteen hundred before I had done preaching: to whom I applied those solemn words, "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by his stripes we are healed.'

"Observing the people, when I had done, to stand gapin and staring upon me, with the most profound astonishment, I told them, If you desire to know who I am, my name is John Wesley. At five in the evening, with God's help, I design to preach here again.

"At five, the hill on which I designed to preach, was covered from the top to the bottom. I never saw so large a number of people together, either in Moorfields, or at Kennington-Common. I knew it was not possible for the one half to hear, although my voice was then strong and clear, and I stood so as to have them all in view, as they were ranged on the side of the hill. The word of God, which I set before them, was, *I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely*. After preaching, the poor people were ready to tread me underfoot, out of pure love and kindness. It was some time before I could possibly get out of the press. I then went back another way than I came. But several were got to our inn before me; by whom I was vehemently importuned to stay with them, at least, a few days; or, however, one day more. But I could not consent: having given my word, to be at Birstal, with God's leave, on Tuesday night."

As they were returning through Knaresborough, not intending to stop there, a young man stopped Mr. Wesley in the street, and earnestly desired him to go to his house. He did so. The young man told him, that their talking with a person, as they went through the town before, had set many on a flame, and that the Sermon they had given him had travelled from one end of the town to the other. Thus was some precious seed of divine truth sown here also, which appears to have produced fruit in the conviction and conversion of divers individuals.

After preaching in sundry places in the west of Yorkshire, he visited Epworth, his native place, where his father had been Rector of the parish many years, and had borne a faithful testimony; though all the seed seemed to have fallen, as by the highway-side.

" It being many years," says he, " since I had been in Epworth before, I went to an Inn, in the middle of the town, not knowing whether there were any left in it now, who would not be ashamed of my acquaintance. But an old servant of my father's, with two or three poor women, presently found me out. I asked her, ' Do you know any in Epworth who are in earnest to be saved ?' She answered, ' I am, by the grace of God : and I know I am saved through faith.' I asked, ' Have you then the peace of God? Do you know that he has forgiven your sins ?' She replied, ' I thank God, I know it well. And many here can say the same thing.'

" Sunday 6. A little before the service began, I went to Mr. Romley the curate, and offered to assist him, either by preaching or reading prayers. But he did not care to accept of my assistance. The church was exceedingly full in the afternoon, a rumour being spread, that I was to preach. But the Sermon on, *Quench not the Spirit,* was not suitable to the expectation of many of the hearers. Mr. Romley told them, 'One of the most dangerous ways of quenching the Spirit, was by enthusiasm :' and enlarged on the character of an enthusiast, in a very florid and oratorical manner. After sermon, J. Taylor stood in the church-yard, and gave notice as the people were coming out, 'Mr. Wesley, not being permitted to preach in the church, designs to preach here at six o'clock.'

"Accordingly, at six I came, and found such a congregation, as, I believe, Epworth never saw before. I stood near the east end of the church, upon my father's tomb-stone, and cried, 'The kingdom of heaven is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.'

"Wednesday 9. I rode over to a neighbouring town, to wait upon a Justice of Peace, a man of candour and understanding; before whom (I was informed) their angry neighbours had carried a whole waggon load of these new hereticks. But, when he asked, What they had done? there was a deep silence: for that was a point their conductors had forgot. At length one said, 'Why, they pretend to be better than other people; and besides, they pray from morning to night.' Mr. S. asked, 'But have they done nothing besides?' 'Yes, Sir,' said an old man, 'An't please your worship, they have *convarted* my wife. 'Till she went among them, she had such a tongue! And now she is as quiet as a lamb.' 'Carry them back, carry them back,' replied the Justice, 'and let them convert all the scolds in the town.'"

He continues, "Friday the 11th, I preached again at Epworth, about eight, on Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones. And great indeed was the shaking among them. Lamentation and great mourning were heard; God bowing their hearts, so that on every side, as with one accord, they lifted up their voice, and wept aloud. Surely He, who sent his Spirit to breathe upon them, will hear their cry, and will help them.

"Saturday 12. I preached on the righteousness of the law, and the righteousness of faith. While I was speaking, several dropped down as dead. And among the rest, such a cry was heard, of sinners groaning for the righteousness of faith, as almost drowned my voice. But many of these soon lifted up their heads with joy, and broke out into thanksgiving; being assured, they now had the desire of their soul, the forgiveness of their sins.

"At six, I preached for the last time in Epworth church-yard, (being to leave the town the next morning,) to a vast multitude gathered together from all parts, on the beginning of our Lord's Sermon on the Mount. I continued among them for near three hours: and yet we scarce knew how to part. O let none think his labour of love is lost, because the fruit does not immediately appear. Near forty years did my father labour here. But he saw little fruit of all his labour. I took some pains among this people too. And my strength also seemed spent in vain. But now the fruit appeared. There were scarce any in the town, on whom either my father or I had taken any pains formerly, but the seed sown so long since now sprung up, bringing forth repentance and remission of sins.'

Preaching at various places in his way, June 28, 1742, Mr. Wesley came to Bristol. From hence he visited Wales, and afterwards divided his labours chiefly between London and Bristol, and some adjacent Societies, till the beginning of November, when he again set out for the North. On the 31st, he came to Newcastle. Here his brother Charles had been preaching some weeks before, with great success, and a Society was already formed. The next morning Mr. Wesley began to preach at five o'clock, a thing unheard of in these parts, till he introduced the practice; which he did every where, if there was any probability, that a few persons could be gathered to hear him. "On the 18th," he says, "I could not but observe the different manner wherein God is pleased to work in different places. The grace of God flows here, with a wider stream than it did at first, either at Bristol or Kingswood. But it does not sink so deep as it did there. Few are thoroughly convinced of sin, and scarce any can witness that the Lamb of God has taken away their sins. I never saw the work of God, in any other place, so evenly and gradually carried on. It continually rises step by step. Not so much seems to be done at any one time, as hath frequently been done at Bristol or London: but something at every time. It is the same with particular souls. I saw none in the triumph of faith, which has been so common in other places. But the believers go on calmly and steadily. Let God do as seemeth him good."

December 20. Having obtained a piece of ground, forty yards in length, to build a house for their meetings and public worship, they laid the first stone of the building. It being computed, that such a house, as was proposed, could not be finished under seven hundred pounds, many were positive it would never be finished at all. "I was of another mind," says Mr. Wesley, "not doubting, but as it was begun for God's sake, he would provide what was needful for finishing it."

January 2, 1743, he reached Epworth; and next day, being Sunday, he preached at five in the morning, and again at eight, from his father's tomb-stone. "Many, from the neighbouring towns, asked if it would not be well, as it was sacrament Sunday, for them to receive it. I told them," says Mr. Wesley, "By all means. But it would be more respectful first to ask Mr. Romley, the Curate's leave." One did so, in the name of the rest. To whom he said, "Pray tell Mr. Wesley, I shall not give *him* the sacrament: for he is not *fit*."

"How wise a God," observes he, "is our God! There could not have been so *fit* a place under heaven, where this should befall me first, as my father's house, the place of my nativity, and the very place where, *according to the straitest sect of our religion*, I had so long *lived a Pharisee!* It was also *fit*, in the highest degree, that he who repelled me from that very table, where I had myself so often distributed the bread of life, should be one who owed his all in this world, to the tender love which *my* father had shewn to *his*, as well as personally to *himself*."

The Messrs. Wesleys having witnessed the happy effects of their preaching, among the Colliers at Kingswood, and those in Newcastle, and the parts adjacent, now determined to visit those also in Staffordshire; who were known to be in a similar state of ignorance and vice. Mr. Charles Wesley went first, and preached sundry times at Wednesbury, and in the neighbourhood with considerable success. Mr. John Wesley now took these parts in his way from Epworth to Bristol. He came to Wednesbury, on Saturday, January 8, and preached in the Town-Hall, at seven in the evening. "It was filled," he observes, "from end to end! and all appeared to be deeply attentive, while I explained, 'This is the covenant which I will make after those days, saith the Lord.'——

"Sunday 9. The Hall was filled again at five; and I proclaimed, 'The name of the Lord; the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.' At eight we met in the place where my brother preached, made, as it were, for the great congregation. It is a large hollow, scarcely a mile from the town, capable of containing four or five thousand people. They stood in a half circle, one above another, and seemed all to receive with joy, that great truth, 'The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost.'

"In the afternoon, Mr. Egginton preached a plain, useful sermon. Almost the whole congregation then went down to the place, where abundance of people were already waiting for us: so that the hollow could not contain them, but was edged round, with those who came from all parts. My subject was, 'By grace ye are saved through faith.' O that all who heard might experience this salvation!

"Monday 10. I preached at five, at eight, and at three. In the intervals of preaching, I spoke to all who desired it. Last night, twenty-nine of them were joined together. Tuesday 11, about a hundred. O that none of these may *draw back to perdition!* Let these *believe unto the saving of the soul!*

Wednesday 12. I took my leave of them in the morning, by shewing the difference between the righteousness of the law, and that of faith.

From hence Mr. Wesley proceeded to Bristol, and thence to London. But his stay was not long at either place. For February 14, notwithstanding the season of the year, and the badness of the roads, at this time in many parts of England, he again set out on horseback for the North. On the 19th he reached Newcastle, (a third time,) and here, and in the neighbouring towns and villages, he spent near six weeks, in preaching and exhorting, praying and conversing with the people, and in regulating the Societies, between eight and nine hundred being now united together at Newcastle alone.

On his return from Newcastle, he again visited Wednesbury, where he found the Society already increased to several hundreds. But a cloud was gathering over them, which threatened a dreadful storm. "The inexcusable folly of Mr. W——s," says Mr. Wesley, "had so provoked Mr. E——, that his former love was turned into bitter hatred. But he had not yet had time to work up the poor people, into that rage and madness, which afterwards appeared; so that they were extremely quiet, both this and the following days, while I improved the present opportunity, and exhorted them, morning and evening, to believe on the Lord Jesus, and to work out their salvation with fear and trembling.

"Yet, on Sunday 17, the scene began to open. I think I never heard so wicked a sermon, and delivered with such bitterness of voice and manner, as that which Mr. E—— preached in the afternoon. I knew what effect this must have in a little time, and therefore judged it expedient, to prepare the poor people for what was to follow; that when it came, they might not be offended. Accordingly, on Tuesday 19, I strongly enforced those words of our Lord, 'If any man will come after me, and hate not his father and mother,—yea, and his own life, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.'

"While I was speaking, a gentleman rode up very drunk; and after many unseemly, and bitter words, laboured much to ride over some of the people. I was surprised to hear he was a neighbouring clergyman. And this too is a man zealous for the Church! Ah, poor Church! If it stood in need of such defenders!"

May 20. Mr. Charles Wesley came again to Wednesbury. "Here," says he, "the seed has taken deep root among the dear Colliers, and many are added to the Church. A Society of more than three hundred are seeking full redemption in the cleansing blood of Christ. The enemy rages exceedingly, and Mr. E—— preaches against them. A few here have returned railing for railing, but the generality have behaved as the followers of Christ Jesus. May 21. I spent the morning in conference with several, who have received the atonement under my brother's ministry. I then walked with many of our brethren to Walsal, where we were received *with* the old complaint, *Behold, these that turn the world upside down, are come hither also.* We walked through the town, amidst the noisy greetings of our enemies.

I stood on the steps of the Market-House. A host of men came against us; they lifted up their voice, and raged horribly. I preached from these words, *But none of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy*, &c. The streets were full of fierce *Ephesian* beasts, (the principal man setting them on,) who roared and shouted, and threw stones incessantly. At the conclusion, a stream of ruffians was suffered to beat me down from the steps; I rose, and having given the blessing, was beat down again, and so a third time. When we had returned thanks to the God of our salvation, from the steps, I bid them depart in peace, and walked through the thickest of the rioters. They reviled, but had no commission to touch an hair of our heads. May 22, I preached to between one and two thousand peaceable people, at Birmingham, and again at Wednesbury in the evening. On the 23d, I took my leave in those words, *Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith; and that we must through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of heaven.* With many tears and blessings, they sent me away, recommended to the grace of God."

It may be proper to observe here that, antecedently to this period, the Methodists had occasionally met with considerable disturbance and persecution in some places. At Bristol, in the years 1739 and 1740, several rioters had disturbed their meetings; and were, for some time, emboldened by impunity. The consequence was, that their numbers continually increased.

"Tuesday, April 1. While I was expounding," says Mr. Wesley, "the former part of the 23d chapter of the Acts, (How wonderfully suited to the occasion! though not by my own choice,) the floods began to lift up their voice. Some or other of the children of Belial had laboured to disturb us several nights before. But now it seemed as if all the hosts of the aliens were come together with one consent. Not only the court, and the alleys, but all the street, upwards and downwards, was filled with people, shouting, cursing, and swearing, and ready to swallow the ground with fierceness and rage. The mayor sent orders that they should disperse. But they set him at nought. The chief constable came next in person, who was till then sufficiently prejudiced against us. But they insulted him also in so gross a manner, as, I believe, fully opened his eyes. At length the mayor sent several of his officers, who took the ringleaders into custody, and did not go until all the rest were dispersed. Surely he hath been to us the minister of God for good.

"Wednesday 2. The rioters were brought up to the Court, the Quarter-Sessions being held that day. They began to excuse themselves, by saying many things of me. But the mayor cut them all short, saying, 'What Mr. Wesley is, is nothing to you. I will keep the peace: I will have no rioting in this city.'"

From this time, the Societies in Bristol enjoyed almost an uninterrupted peace.

In London also rioters assembled at various places, and frequently treated Mr. Wesley, and many of his serious hearers, in a cruel manner. They followed them with showers of stones, and once attempted to unroof the Foundery, where the congregation was assembled, and had nearly accomplished their design. The common cry was, "You may treat them as you please, for there is no law for them." But Sir John Ganson, the Chairman of the Middlesex Justices, called on Mr. Wesley, and informed him, that he had no need to suffer these riotous mobs to molest him, adding, "Sir, I and the other Middlesex magistrates, have *orders from above* to do you justice, whenever you apply to us." A short time after, he did apply. Justice was done, though not with rigour, and from that time, the Society had peace in London.

There is good authority to say, that his late Majesty, (George II,) on representation made to him, of the persecution suffered by the Societies at this time, declared that "No man in his dominions should be persecuted on the account of religion, while he sat on the throne." A declaration, that certainly reflected much honour on the king.

Now had the justices, in and about Wednesbury, acted as the magistrates at Bristol and London had done, and as the duty of their office laid them under an obligation of doing, there would have been no such tumults in Staffordshire, as we have mentioned. But instead of this, they encouraged, and even stirred up the basest of the people to outrages which were a scandal to the Christian name. Riotous mobs were summoned together by the sound of the horn: men, women, and children, were abused in the most shocking manner; being beaten, stoned, covered with mud: some, even pregnant women, treated in a manner that cannot be mentioned. In the mean time, their houses were broke open by any that pleased, and their goods spoiled or carried away; some of the owners standing by, but not daring to oppose, as it would have been at the peril of their lives. For a full account of these riots, I refer the reader to a small Pamphlet, published on the subject;—to Mr. Wesley's fifth Journal;—and, his Life, by Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore.

These riots continued through a great part of the next year. The mob at Walsal, Darlaston, and Wednesbury, hired for the purpose by their betters, broke open their poor neighbour's houses at their pleasure, by day and night, extorting money from the few that had it; taking away or destroying their victuals and goods; beating and wounding their bodies; abusing their women, and openly declaring they would destroy every Methodist in the country: the *Christian* country, where his Majesty's peaceable and loyal subjects were so treated for eight months: and then publickly branded in the Whitehall and London Evening Post, for rioters and incendiaries!!

Next in ignorance and all manner of wickedness to the Colliers at Kingswood, Newcastle, and Wednesbury, we may place the Tinners in Cornwall. August 26, of this year, (1734,) Mr. Wesley set out to visit them. His brother, and two of the Preachers had already laboured among them with great success. Mr. Wesley made no considerable stop, till he came to St. Ives. Sometime before, Captain Turner, of Bristol, connected, it seems, with the Methodists, had put in here, and was agreeably surprised to find a little society formed upon Dr. Woodward's plan, who constantly met together. They were greatly refreshed and strengthened by him, as he was also by them. This was the occasion of introducing the Methodists into this place. Mr. Wesley spake severally with those in the Society, now increased to about a hundred and twenty, near a hundred of whom had found peace with God. He spent three weeks in preaching here, and in Zennor, Morva, St. Just, Sennan, St. Mary's, (one of the Isles of Scilly,) Gwenap, and on several of the Downs throughout the West of Cornwall.

It has pleased God to give increase to the seed sown here by his servants, so that it has since produced an abundant harvest. There is hardly any part of the three kingdoms, where a change has been more visible and general, in the manners of the people. *Hurling*, their favourite diversion, at which limbs were often broken, and frequently lives lost, is now hardly heard of; and that scandal of humanity, so constantly practised on the coasts of Cornwall, the plundering vessels that struck upon the rocks, and afterwards murdering those, who escaped out of the wreck, is now either quite at an end, or the Gentlemen, and not the poor Tinners, are to be blamed. And more has been done to suppress smuggling, by preaching the Gospel in the county, and enforcing the rules of the Society, than either the laws of the Country, or the officers of Excise, were ever able to effect. But it is not harmless or outward decency alone, which has so increased, but the religion of the heart:—faith working by love, producing all inward and outward holiness.

In the April following, Mr. Wesley took a second journey into Cornwall, and went through many towns he had not seen before. Since his former visit, there had been hot persecution both of the Preachers and people. The preaching-house at St. Ives was pulled down to the ground: one of the Preachers pressed, and sent for a soldier, as were several of the people; over and above the being stoned, covered with dirt, and the like, which was the treatment many of them met with from day to day. But, notwithstanding this, they who had been eminent for hurling, fighting, drinking, and all manner of wickedness, continued eminent for sobriety, piety, and all manner of goodness. In all parts, more and more, the lions became lambs, continually praising God, and calling their old companions in sin, to come and magnify the Lord together.

About the same time, John Nelson, and Thomas Beard, were pressed and sent for soldiers, for no other crime, either committed or pretended, than that of calling sinners to repentance. The case of John Nelson is well known. Thomas Beard also was nothing terrified by his adversaries. Yet the body, after a while, sunk under its burden. He was then lodged in the Hospital of Newcastle, where he praised God continually. His fever increasing, he was bled: his arm festered, mortified, and was cut off; two or three days after which, God signed his discharge, and called him to his eternal home.

SECTION VII.

OF THE CONDUCT OF MR. WESLEY AND THE METHODISTS, DURING THE TROUBLES IN 1744 AND 1745; OF HIS PREACHING TO THE SOLDIERS; AND IMPROVING THE ALARMS, WHICH THEN PREVAILED, TO BRING SINNERS EVERY WHERE TO REPENTANCE.

IN the beginning of the year 1744, a report prevailed, that the French threatened an invasion, and were expected to land every hour, in support of Charles Stuart, the Pretender to the Crown of England. At this critical time, all denominations of people were addressing the King, and testifying their attachment to the august family, that now fills the throne. The principles of the Methodists were but imperfectly known; and their itinerancy, and private Societies, brought them under general suspicion.—Mr. Wesley, therefore, was urged by many to write an Address to His Majesty. He and those in connection with him were continually declaring their attachment to the King's person and government, both in private and public, but he was unwilling to address the King, lest his Societies should be considered as a particular sect, or body of people separate from the Established Church.

His brother Charles was of the same mind, and March 6, wrote to him on this subject, as follows. "My objection to your Address, in the name of the Methodists, is, that it would constitute us a *Sect:* at least it would seem to *allow*, that we are a body distinct from the national Church; whereas we are only a sound part of it." Nevertheless, Mr. Wesley at length so far yielded to importunity, as to draw up the following Address; which, however, for the above-mentioned reasons, on further consideration, he did not present. The thoughts and style of a man of God, may be easily seen therein, rather than the laboured eloquence, so common upon such occasions.

"To the King's most excellent Majesty:

"The humble Address of the Societies in England and Wales, called Methodists:

" *Most gracious Sovereign,*

" So inconsiderable as we are, *a people scattered and peeled, and trodden under foot, from the beginning hitherto,* we should in no wise have presumed, even on this great occasion, to open our lips to your Majesty, had we not been induced, indeed constrained so to do, by two considerations: the one, that in spite of all our remonstrances on that head, we are continually represented as a peculiar sect of men, separating ourselves from the Established Church: the other, that we are still traduced as inclined to popery, and consequently disaffected to your Majesty.

" Upon these considerations, we think it incumbent upon us, if we must stand as a distinct body from our brethren, to tender for ourselves, our most dutiful regards to your sacred Majesty: and to declare in the presence of Him we serve, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, that we are a part (however mean) of that Protestant Church, established in these kingdoms: that we unite together for this, and no other end—to promote, so far as we may be capable, justice, mercy, and truth, the glory of God, and peace and good-will among men: that we detest and abhor the fundamental doctrines of the Church of Rome, and are steadily attached to your Majesty's royal person and illustrious house.

" We cannot indeed say or do either more or less, than we apprehend consistent with the written word of God. But we are ready to obey your Majesty to the uttermost, in all things which we conceive to be agreeable thereto. And we earnestly exhort all with whom we converse, as they fear God, to honour the King. We, of the Clergy in particular, put all men in mind, to revere the higher powers as of God; and continually declare, Ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

"Silver and gold, most of us must own, we have none. But such as we have, we humbly beg your Majesty to accept, together with our hearts and prayers. May He who hath bought us with his blood, the Prince of all the Kings of the earth, fight against all the enemies of your Majesty, with the two-edged sword that cometh out of his mouth! And when he calleth your Majesty from this throne, full of years and victories, may it be with that voice, 'Come, receive the kingdom, prepared for thee from the beginning of the world.'

"These are the continual prayers of your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects,

"JOHN WESLEY, &c."

All this year the alarms were uninterrupted, from the French on the one hand, and the rebels on the other: and a general panic ran through the nation, from the East to the West, from the North to the South. Mr. Wesley, therefore, judged it needful to visit as many places as possible, and avail himself of the precious opportunity. His brother and the other preachers were of the same mind: *they spake, and spared not.* They rushed through every open door, "And cried, Sinners, behold the Lamb!" And their word did not fall to the ground: they saw abundant fruit of their labour. Mr. Wesley went through many parts of Wales; through most of the midland counties, and then through Lincolnshire and Yorkshire, to Newcastle-upon-Tyne. And multitudes who were utterly careless before, did now prepare to meet their God.

Many were awakened in a remarkable manner:—many were converted to God, and many enabled to testify, that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. Mean time, they were in most places tolerably quiet, as to popular tumults. Where any thing of the kind appeared, the magistrates usually interposed, as, indeed, it was their duty to do. And wherever the peace officers do their duty, no riot can long subsist.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in particular, was a place of almost continual alarm during the troubles in Scotland. Here, therefore, Mr. Wesley remained a considerable time: and his labour was not in vain. Many now learned truly to honour the King, from the right principle, the fear of God, who were before as reeds shaken with the wind. But his soul was grieved within him, at the extreme ungodliness of those who were appointed to defend the land. He therefore wrote the following letter to one of the magistrates.

"Sir,

"The fear of God, the love of my country, and the regard I have for his Majesty King George, constrain me to write a few plain words to one, who is no stranger to these principles of action.

"My soul has been pained day by day, even in walking the streets of Newcastle, at the senseless, shameless wickedness, the ignorant profaneness of the poor men, to whom our lives are intrusted. The continual cursing and swearing, the wanton blasphemy of the soldiers in general, must needs be a torture to the sober ear, whether of a christian or honest infidel.

Can any that either fear God, or love their neighbour, hear this without concern? Especially, if they consider the interest of our country, as well as these unhappy men themselves? For, can it be expected, that God should be on their side, who are daily affronting him to his face? And, if God be not on their side, how little will either their number, or courage, or strength avail?

"Is there no man that careth for these souls? Doubtless there are some who ought so to do. But many of these, if I am rightly informed, receive large pay, and do just nothing.

"I would to God it were in my power, in any degree, to supply their lack of service. I am ready to do what in me lies, to call these poor sinners to repentance, once or twice a day, (while I remain in these parts,) at any hour, or place. And I desire no pay at all for doing this: unless what my Lord shall give at his appearing.

"If it be objected, (from our heathenish poet,) 'This conscience will make cowards of us all:' I answer, let us judge by matter of fact. Let either friends or enemies speak. Did those who feared God behave as cowards at Fontenoy? Did John Haime, the dragoon, betray any cowardice, before or after his horse sunk under him? Or did William Clements, when he received the first ball in his left, and the second in his right arm? Did John Evans, when the cannon-ball took off both his legs? Did he not call about him as long as he could speak, to praise and fear God, and honour the king; as one who feared nothing, but lest his breath should be spent in vain?

"If it were objected, that I should only fill their heads with peculiar whims and notions! That might easily be known. Only let the officers hear with their own ears: and they may judge, whether I do not preach the plain principles of manly, rational religion.

"Having myself no knowledge of the General, I took the liberty to make this offer to you. I have no interest herein: but I shall rejoice to serve, as I am able, my King and Country. If it be judged, that this will be of no real service, let the proposal die, and be forgotten. But I beg you, Sir, to believe, that I have the same glorious cause, for which you have shewn so becoming a zeal, earnestly at heart: and that therefore I am, with warm respect,

"Sir, your most obedient servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."

A polite answer was returned by the Magistrate; and the General being informed of it, gave his consent; in consequence of which, Mr. Wesley preached to the soldiers, as long as he continued in those parts.

On Friday, August 24, 1744, Mr. Wesley preached for the last time at Oxford, before the University. He had preached to them twice before, since the time he began to declare the truth in the fields and highways. Those sermons are printed in the first volume of his Works, and are well worth a serious perusal. "I am now," says he, "clear of the blood of these men. I have fully delivered my own soul. And I am well pleased that it should be the very day, on which, in the last century, near two thousand burning and shining lights were put out at one stroke.

Yet what a wide difference is there between their case and mine! They were turned out of house and home, and all that they had: whereas I am only hindered from preaching, without any other loss: and that in a kind of honourable manner: it being determined, that when my next turn to preach comes, they will pay another person to preach for me." And so they did twice or thrice: even to the time that he resigned his fellowship.

About this time, Mr. Wesley and his brother began to be spoken of in Scotland, and a few of the most pious ministers there, though differing from the two brothers in many points of doctrine, yet rejoiced at the great revival of practical religion in England, by their means. Mr. James Robe, minister of Killsyth, having received from a friend some account of them, wrote as follows: "I was much pleased with what you wrote to me, of the Messrs. Wesleys. I rejoice, that justification, the imputed righteousness of Jehovah, our righteousness, received by faith alone, and Gospel holiness, are the subjects of their sermons: and the debated points, (various sentiments about which, are not inconsistent with saving faith, and our acceptance with God,) are laid aside. I embrace fellowship with them, and pray, that the Lord of the vineyard may give them success, in preaching the Faith of Christ, so much needed in England. I have learned something new, as to the exhorters.* From what you mention of them, I look upon them, as so many licensed probationers, or useful public teachers; which is the case of our probationers. This provides us with an answer to objections, besides that of the extraordinary circumstances of the Established Church. I beg you to salute the two brothers for me much in the Lord."

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* He means the Lay-Preachers.

Mr. James Erskine, who frequently, in the course of the year 1744, or 1745, corresponded with Mr. Wesley, transmitted this part of Mr. Robe's letter to him; and with a liberality, not common to Scotchmen at that time, he asks, "Are the points which give the different denominations to Christians, and from which proceed separate communions, animosities, evil-speakings, surmises, and, at last, coolness of affection, aptness to misconstrue, slowness to think well of others, stiffness in our own conceits, and overvaluing our own opinion, &c. &c.—are these points as important, as clearly revealed, and as essential, or as closely connected with essentials of practical Christianity, as *the loving one another, with a pure heart fervently*, and *not forsaking*, much less refusing, *the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some was*, and of almost all *is*?" Every candid man will most certainly answer this question in the negative. And it requires no great degree of discernment to perceive, that the narrow, party spirit, which prevails among most denominations of Christians, with regard to communion, and church fellowship, even where it is acknowledged that the essential doctrines of the Gospel, are held fast, is one grand hinderance of brotherly love, and of the more general diffusion of real, experimental Christianity.

The light, however, in which Mr. Wesley and his helpers were viewed by some of the Clergy of the Church of England, was very different from that in which they appeared to these pious and eminent Ministers in Scotland. February, 1747. "Being in

Yorkshire," says Mr. Wesley, "I met with a Clergyman, who told me some of the Preachers had frequenty preached in his parish; and his judgment was, 1. That their preaching had done some good, but more harm. Because, 2. Those who had attended it, had only turned from one degree of wickedness to another; they had only exchanged sabbath-breaking, swearing, or drunkenness, for slandering, backbiting, and evil-speaking: and, 3. Those who did not attend it, were provoked hereby to return evil for evil. So that the former, in effect, were no better, and the latter worse than before.

"The same objection, in substance," says Mr. Wesley, "has been made in most other parts of England. It therefore deserves a serious answer, which will equally hold in all places. It is allowed, first, that our preaching has done good; common swearers, sabbath-breakers, drunkards, thieves, fornicators, having been reclaimed from those outward sins. But it is affirmed, secondly, That it has done more harm; the person so reclaimed, only changing one wickedness for another: and their neighbours being so provoked thereby, as to become worse than before.

"Those who have left their outward sins, you affirm, have only changed drunkenness, or sabbath-breaking, for backbiting, or evil-speaking. I answer, if you affirm this of them all, it is notoriously false; many we can name, who have left cursing, swearing, back-biting, drunkenness, and evil-speaking, altogether; and who are to this day, just as fearful of slandering, as they are of cursing or swearing. And if some are not yet enough aware of this snare of the devil, we may hope they will be ere long. Meantime let us bless God for what he has done, and pray that he would deliver them from this death also.

"You affirm further, 'That their neighbours are provoked hereby, to return evil for evil; and so while the former are no better, the latter are worse than they were before.'

"I answer, 1. These are worse than they were before. But why? Because they do fresh *despite to the Spirit of grace;* because they *despise* that *long-suffering* love of God, which would lead them, as it does their neighbours, to repentance. And in laying the blame of this, on those, who will *no longer run with them to the same excess of riot*, they only fulfil the Scriptures, and fill up the measure of their own iniquity.

"I answer, 2. There is still no proportion, between the good on the one hand, and the harm on the other: for they who reject the goodness of God, were servants of the devil before; and they are but servants of the devil still. But they who accept it, are brought from the power of Satan, to serve the living and true God."

In April, Mr. Wesley, on his return from the North, spent an hour with the same Clergyman, and pressed him to make good his assertion, that the preaching of the Methodists had done more harm than good. This he did not choose to pursue; but enlarged on the harm it might occasion to succeeding generations. Mr. Wesley adds, "I cannot see the force of this argument; I dare not neglect the doing certain present good, for fear of some probable ill consequences, in the succeeding century."

In the spring and summer of the same year, (1747,) Mr. Wesley and the Preachers were invited into many parts of Yorkshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, and Cheshire, where they had not been before. Mr. John Bennet* was a most indefatigable and successful labourer, for several years, in these parts of the country. He was a man of sound judgment, and of considerable abilities as a preacher. From a letter which he wrote to Mr. Wesley, sometime after this period, we may form some notion of the labours of the Preachers. "Many doors," says he, "are opened for preaching in these parts, but cannot be supplied for want of Preachers. I think some one should be sent to assist me, otherwise we shall lose ground. My circuit is one hundred and fifty miles in two weeks; during which time, I preach publickly thirty-four times, besides meeting the Societies, visiting the sick, and transacting the temporal business. I think the above is too much for me, considering my weak constitution."

This was great labour, but Mr. Wesley, and his brother Mr. Charles, laboured still more. They preached as often, did all the other business, and frequently travelled treble the distance in the same space of time. I shall present my readers with an account of one of Mr. Wesley's journeys, taken from his own Journals, as a specimen of his mode of travelling, of his persevering diligence in the work of calling sinners to repentance, and of the hardships which he endured in the prosecution of it.

"Tuesday, February 10, 1747. My brother returned from the North, and I prepared to supply his place there. Sunday 15, I was very weak and faint. But on Monday 16, I rose soon after three, lively and strong, and found all my complaints were fled away like a dream.

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* Father of the late Rev. Mr. Bennet, minister to a congregation on the Stones in Moorfields.

"I was wondering the day before at the mildness of the weather, such as seldom attends me in my journeys. But my wonder now ceased; the wind was turned full north, and blew so exceeding hard and keen, that when we came to Hatfield, neither my companions nor I had much use of our hands or feet. After resting an hour, we bore up again through the wind and snow, which drove full in our faces. But this was only a squall. In Baldock-field the storm began in earnest. The large hail drove so vehemently in our faces, that we could not see, nor hardly breathe. However, before two o'clock, we reached Baldock, where one met and conducted us safe to Potton.—About six, I preached to a serious congregation.

"Tuesday 17, we set out as soon as it was well light. But it was really hard work to get forward. For the ice would neither well bear nor break. And the untracked snow covering all the road, we had much ado to keep our horses on their feet. Mean time the wind rose higher and higher, till it was ready to overturn both man and beast. However, after a short bait at Bugden, we pushed on, and met in the middle of an open field with so violent a storm of rain and hail, as we had not had before. It drove through our coats, great and small, boots, and every thing, and yet froze as it fell, even upon our eyebrows; so that we had scarce either strength or motion left, when we came into the Inn at Stilton.

"We now gave up our hopes of reaching Grantham, the snow falling faster and faster. However, we took the advantage of a fair blast, and made the best of our way to Stamford-Heath. But here a new difficulty arose, from the snow lying in large drifts. Sometimes horses and men were well nigh swallowed up. Yet, in less than an hour we were brought safe to Stamford. Being willing to get as far as we could, we made but a short stop here; and about sun-set, came, cold and weary, yet well, to a little town called Brig-Casterton.

"Wednesday 18. Our servant came up, and said, 'Sir, there is no travelling to-day. Such a quantity of snow has fallen in the night, that the roads are quite filled up.' I told him, 'At least we can walk twenty miles a-day, with our horses in our hands.' So, in the name of God, we set out. The North-east wind was as piercing as a sword, and had driven the snow into such uneven heaps, that the main road was not passable. However, we kept on, on foot or horseback, till we came to the White Lion, at Grantham. Some from Grimsby had appointed to meet us here. But not hearing any thing of them, (for they were at another house by mistake,) after an hour's rest we set out straight for Epworth.

"Thursday 19. The frost was not so sharp: so that we had little difficulty till we came to Haxey-Car. But here the ice which covered the dikes and great part of the common, would neither bear nor readily break. Nor did we know, there being no track of man or beast, what parts of the dikes were fordable. However, we committed ourselves to God, and went on. We hit all our fords exactly, and without any fall or considerable hindrance came to Epworth, in two hours, full as well as when we left London."

Thus, strange as it may seem, did he labour as long as he could ride on horseback; nor, perhaps, could an instance be found, during the space of *fifty years*, wherein the severest weather hindered him, even for one day!

Many were the "hair-breadth escapes," which he experienced during that time; and which he has noted in his Journals, with lively gratitude to Him who numbers the hairs of our head. In this year he records a remarkable one.

"I took horse," says he, "in Bristol, for Wick, where I had appointed to preach at three in the afternoon. I was riding by the wall through St. Nicholas' gate, (my horse having been brought to the house where I dined,) just as a cart turned short from St. Nicholas' street, and came swiftly down the hill. There was just room to pass between the wheel of it, and the wall; but that space was taken up by the carman. I called to him to go back, or I must ride over him. But the man, as if deaf, walked straight forward. This obliged me to hold back my horse. In the mean time, the shaft of the cart came full against his shoulder, with such a shock as beat him to the ground. He shot me forward over his head, as an arrow out of a bow, where I lay, with my arms and legs, I know not how, stretched out in a line, close to the wall. The wheel ran by, close to my side, but only dirted my clothes. I found no flutter of spirit, but the same composure as if I had been sitting in my study. When the cart was gone, I rose. Abundance of people gathered round, till a gentleman desired me to step into his shop. After cleaning myself a little, I took horse again, and was at Wick by the time appointed. I returned to Bristol, (where the report of my being killed had spread far and wide,) time enough to praise God in the great congregation, and to preach on, 'Thou, Lord, shalt save both man and beast.'"

Mr. Wesley now also visited Plymouth, and many other places in the West: and in every place *the work of God* prospered. (Mr. Wesley observes, "This is no cant word: it means the conversion of sinners from sin to holiness.") But still they were obliged in many parts, to carry their lives in their hands. Some instances of this have been related already. I will mention one more in his own words.

"Friday, February 12, 1748. After preaching at Oakhill, a village in Somersetshire, I rode on to Shepton-Mallett, but found the people all under a strange consternation. A mob, they said, was hired, and made sufficiently drunk to do all manner of mischief. I began preaching between four and five; and none hindered or interrupted me at all. We had a blessed opportunity, and the hearts of many were exceedingly comforted. I wondered what was become of the mob. But, we were quickly informed, they mistook the place, imagining I should alight, (as I used to do) at William Stone's house, and had summoned, by drum, all their forces together, to meet me at my coming. But Mr. Swindells, (one of the Preachers,) innocently carrying me to the other end of the town, they did not find their mistake, till I had done preaching.

"However, they attended us from the Preaching-house to William Stone's, throwing dirt, stones, and clods, in abundance; but they could not hurt us, only Mr. Swindells had a little dirt on his coat, and I a few specks on my hat.

"After we had gone into the house, they began throwing large stones, in order to break the door.

But perceiving this would require some time, they dropped that design for the present. They then broke all the tiles on the Pent-house over the door, and poured in a shower of stones at the windows. One of their Captains, in his great zeal, had followed us into the house, and was now shut in with us. He did not like this, and would fain have got out; but it was not possible. So he kept as close to me as he could, thinking himself safest when he was near me. But staying a little behind, (when I went up two pair of stairs, and stood close on one side, where we were a little sheltered,) a large stone struck him on the forehead, and the blood spouted out like a stream. He cried out, 'O Sir, are we to die to night? What must I do? What must I do?' I said, 'Pray to God. He is able to deliver you from all danger.' He took my advice, and began praying, I believe, as he had scarce ever done before.

" Mr. Swindells and I then went to prayer: after which, I told him, 'We must not stay here. We must go down immediately.' He said, 'Sir, we cannot stir, you see how the stones fly about. I walked straight through the room, and down the stairs; and not a stone came in, till we were at the bottom. The mob had just broke open the door, when we came into the lower room; and while they burst in at one door, we walked out at the other. Nor did one man take any notice of us, though we were within five yards of each other.

" They filled the house at once, and proposed setting it on fire. But one of them remembering that his own house was next, persuaded them not to do it. Hearing one of them cry out, 'They are gone over the grounds,' I thought the hint was good. So we went over the grounds to the far end of the town, where one waited, and undertook to guide us to Oakhill.

"I was riding on in Shepton-Lane, it being now quite dark, when he cried out, 'Come down: come down from the bank.' I did as I was desired; but the bank being high, and the side almost perpendicular, I came down all at once, my horse and I tumbling one over another. But we both rose unhurt. In less than an hour we came to Oakhill, and the next morning to Bristol.

SECTION VIII.

OF THE NATURE OF THE METHODIST SOCIETIES, AND OF THEIR PLAN OF DISCIPLINE.

AS many Societies were now formed, exactly on the same principles, in various parts of the kingdom, although at a considerable distance from each other, it is time to lay before the reader those *Rules*, by which they then were and still are all governed.—These were first drawn up by Mr. Wesley, in conjunction with his brother, in the beginning of the year 1743, at which time they were introduced into the Society of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. "Sunday, March 6," says Mr. Wesley, "I read over in the Society, the Rules, which all our members are to observe, and desired every one seriously to consider whether he was willing to conform thereto or not." Those who would not, but walked unworthy of the Gospel, were excluded, as is still our custom in all places. These Rules were printed under the title of "The *Nature*, *Design*, and GENERAL RULES of the *United Societies*, in London, Bristol, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, &c."

They state the Nature and Design of a Methodist Society, in the following words:

"Such a Society is no other than a company of men having the form, and seeking the power of godliness: united, in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation."

That it may the more easily be discerned, whether they are indeed working out their own salvation, each Society is divided into smaller companies, called Classes, according to their respective places of abode. There are about twelve persons, (sometimes fifteen, twenty, or even more,) in each Class; one of whom is stiled the Leader.—It is his business,

I. To see each person in his Class, once a week at least, in order

To inquire how their souls prosper;

To advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require;

To receive what they are willing to give, to the poor, or toward the support of the Gospel.

II. To meet the Minister, and the Stewards of the Society, once a week, in order

To inform the Minister of any that are sick, or of any that walk disorderly, and will not be reproved.

To pay to the Stewards what they have received of their several Classes, in the week preceding: And,

To shew their account of what each person has contributed.

There is one only condition previously required of those who desire admission into these Societies, namely, *A desire to flee from the wrath to come, to be saved from their sins:* but, wherever this is really fixed in the soul, it will be shown by its fruits. It is therefore expected, of all who continue therein, that they should continue to evidence their desire of Salvation:—

First, By doing no harm, by avoiding evil in every kind: especially, that which is most generally practised; such as

The taking the Name of God in vain:

The profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work thereon, or by buying or selling:

Drunkenness, *buying or selling spirituous liquors;* or *drinking them*, unless in cases of extreme necessity:

Fighting, quarrelling, brawling; brother *going to law* with brother; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing: the *using many words* in buying or selling:

The *buying or selling uncustomed goods:*

The *giving* or *taking things on usury*, i. e. unlawful interest:

Uncharitable or unprofitable conversation: particularly speaking evil of magistrates or of minsters:

Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us:

Doing what we know is not for the glory of God: as,

The *putting on of gold or costly apparel:*

The *taking such diversions* as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus:

The

The *singing* those *songs*, or *reading* those *books*, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God:

Softness, and needless self-indulgence:

Laying up treasure upon earth:

Borrowing without a probability of paying; or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

It is expected of all who continue in these Societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of Salvation:—

Secondly, By doing good, by being in every kind merciful after their power, as they have opportunity; doing good of every possible sort, and, as far as possible, to all men:

To their bodies, of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick, or in prison.

To their souls, by instructing, *reproving*, or exhorting, all we have any intercourse with: trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine of devils, that "We are not to do good, unless *our hearts be free to it.*"

By doing good, especially to them that are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others, buying one of another, helping each other in business: and so much the more, because the world will love its own, and them *only*.

By all possible *diligence and frugality*, that the Gospel be not blamed.

By running with patience the race that is set before them, *denying themselves, and taking up their cross* *daily;* submitting to bear the reproach of Christ; to be as the filth and off-scouring of the world; and looking that men should *say all manner of evil of them falsely for the Lord's sake.*

It is expected of all who desire to continue in these Societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of Salvation:—

Thirdly, By attending on all the ordinances of God: such are

The public worship of God:

The ministry of the word, either read or expounded:

The supper of the Lord: Family and private prayer:

Searching the Scriptures: and, Fasting or abstinence.

These are the General Rules of our Societies; all which we are taught of God to observe, even in his written Word, the only Rule, and the sufficient Rule, both of our faith and practice. And all these we know his Spirit writes on every truly awakened heart. If there be any among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be made known unto them who watch over that soul, as they that must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways: we will bear with him for a season. But then, if he repent not, he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls.

JOHN WESLEY.
May 1, 1743. CHARLES WESLEY.

As the various Societies now began to walk by these Rules; and to be trained up in the *Discipline* as well as the *Doctrine* of the Lord, it may be well to give the reader a circumstantial account of the *nature* of that Discipline, and of the *reason* and *manner* of its introduction. This I cannot do better than in Mr. Wesley's own words, extracted from a letter to the Rev. Mr. Perronet, Vicar of Shoreham, in Kent, written about this time, and afterwards published, under the title of *A Plain Account of the People called Methodists.* He speaks as follows :

"Rev. and dear Sir,

"Some time since you desired an account of the *whole Economy* of the people commonly called METHODISTS. And you received a true, (as far as it went,) but not a full account. To supply what I think was wanting in that, I send you this account ; that you may know not only their *practice*, on every head, but likewise the *reasons* whereon it is grounded ; the *occasion* of every step they have taken, and the *advantages* reaped thereby.

"But I must premise, That as they had not the least expectation at first, of any thing like what has since followed, so they had no previous design or plan at all, but every thing arose just as the occasion offered. They saw or felt some impending or pressing evil, or some good end necessary to be pursued. And many times they fell unawares on the very thing which secured the good, or removed the evil. At other times they consulted on the most probable means, following only *common sense*, and *Scripture*: though they generally found, in looking back, something in *Christian antiquity* likewise, very nearly parallel thereto.

"I. A few years ago, my brother and I were desired to preach in many parts of London. We had no view therein, but so far as we were able (and we knew God *could* work by whomsoever it pleased him) to *convince* those who would hear, what true Christianity is, and to *persuade* them to embrace it.

"Many of those who heard us, began to cry out, that we brought *strange things to their ears:* that this was a doctrine which they never heard before; or, at least, never regarded. They *searched the Scriptures, whether these things were so,* and acknowledged *the truth as it is in* Jesus. Their hearts also were influenced to follow Jesus Christ, *and him crucified.*

"Immediately they were surrounded with difficulties: all the world rose up against them: neighbours, strangers, acquaintance, relations, friends, began to cry out amain; 'be not righteous over much: why shouldest thou destroy thyself: let not much religion make thee mad.'

"One, and another, and another, came to us, asking, What they should do? being distressed on every side, as every one strove to weaken, and none to strengthen their hands in God. We advised them, 'Strengthen you one another. Talk together as often as you can. And pray earnestly with and for one another, that you may endure to the end, and be saved.' Against this advice, we presumed, there could be no objection; as being grounded on the plainest reason, and so many scriptures, both of the Old Testament, and the New, that it would be tedious to recite them.

"They said, 'But we want *you* likewise to talk with us often, to direct and quicken us in our way, to give us the advices which you well know we need, and to pray with us as well as for us.' I asked, Which of you desire this? Let me know your names, and places of abode. They did so. But I soon found they were too many for me to talk with severally, so often as they wanted it. So I told them, ‘ If you will all of you come together, every Thursday, in the evening, I will gladly spend some time with you in prayer, and give you the best advice I can.’

“ Thus arose, without any previous design on either side, what was afterwards called, ‘ A Society :’ a very innocent name, and very common in London, for any number of people *associating* themselves together. The thing proposed in their associating themselves together was obvious to every one. They wanted to *flee from the wrath to come*, and to assist each other in so doing.

“ And it quickly appeared, that their thus uniting together, answered the end proposed therein. In a few months, the far greater part of those who had begun to fear God, and work righteousness, but were not united together, grew faint in their minds, and fell back into what they were before. Mean while, the far greater part of those, who were thus united together, continued ‘ striving to enter in at the strait gate, and to lay hold on eternal life.’

“ Upon reflection, I could not but observe, this is the very thing which was from the beginning of Christianity. In the earliest times, those whom God had sent forth, preached the gospel to every creature. And the οι ακροαται, the body of hearers, were mostly either Jews or Heathens. But, as soon as any of these were so convinced of the truth, as to forsake sin, and seek the gospel salvation, they immediately joined them together, took an account of their names, advised them to watch over each other, and met these κατηχȣμενοι, (Catechumens, as they were then called,) apart from the great congregation, that they might instruct, rebuke, exhort, and pray with them, and for them, according to their several necessities.

" But it was not long, before an objection was made to this, which had not once entered into my thought. ' Is not this making a Schism! Is not the joining these people together, gathering churches out of churches?'

" It was easily answered, if you mean only gathering people out of buildings called Churches, it is. But if you mean, dividing Christians from Christians, and so destroying fellowship, it is not. For, 1. These were not Christians before they were thus joined. Most of them were barefaced Heathens. 2. Neither are they Christians, from whom you suppose them to be divided. You will not look me in the face, and say they are. What! Drunken Christians? Cursing aud swearing Christians? Lying Christians? Cheating Christians? If these are Christians at all, they are *devil Christians*, (as the poor Malabarians term them.) 3. Neither are they divided any more than they were before, even from these wretched, *devil Christians*. They are as ready as ever to assist them, and to perform every office of real kindness toward them. 4. If it be said, ' but there are some true Christians in the parish, and you destroy the Christian fellowship between these and them.' I answer, That which never existed, cannot be destroyed. Which of those true Christians had any such fellowship with these? Who watched over them in love? Who marked their growth in grace! Who advised and exhorted them from time to time? Who prayed with them and for them, as they had need? This, and this alone, is Christian fellowship:

but, alas! Where is it to be found? Look East or West, North or South: name what parish you please. Is this Christian fellowship there? Rather, are not the bulk of the parishioners a mere rope of sand? What Christian connection is there between them? What intercourse in spiritual things? What watching over each other's souls? What bearing of one another's burdens? What a mere jest is it then, to talk so gravely of *destroying* what never was? The real truth is just the reverse of this: we have *introduced* Christian fellowship where it was *utterly destroyed*. And the fruits of it have been peace, joy, love, and zeal for every good word and work.

" II. But as much as we endeavoured to watch over each other, we soon found some who did not *live the gospel*. I do not know, that any hypocrites were crept in; for, indeed, there was no temptation. But several grew cold, and gave way to the sins which had long easily beset them. We quickly perceived there were many ill consequences, of suffering these to remain among us. It was dangerous to others; inasmuch as all sin is of an infectious nature. It brought such a scandal on their brethren, as exposed them to what was not properly the reproach of Christ. It laid a stumbling-block in the way of others, and caused the truth to be evil spoken of.

" We groaned under those inconveniences long, before a remedy could be found. The people were scattered so wide in all parts of the town, from Wapping to Westminster, that I could not easily see what the behaviour of each person, in his own neighbourhood, was. So that several disorderly walkers did much hurt, before I was apprized of it.

" At length, while we were thinking of quite another

other thing, we struck upon a method for which we have cause to bless God ever since. I was talking with several of the Society in Bristol, concerning the means of paying the debts there: when one stood up, and said, 'Let every member of the Society give a *penny* a week, till all are paid.' Another answered, 'But many of them are poor, and cannot afford to do it.' Then said he, 'Put eleven of the poorest with me, and if they can give any thing, well. I will call on them weekly, and if they can give nothing, I will give for them, as well as for myself. And each of you call on eleven of your neighbours weekly; receive what they give, and make up what is wanting.' It was done. In a while, some of these informed me, 'they found such, and such a one, did not live as he ought.' It struck me immediately, 'This is the thing, the very thing we have wanted so long.' I called together all the Leaders of the Classes, (so we used to term them, and their companies,) and desired, that each would make a particular inquiry, into the behaviour of those whom he saw weekly; they did so. Many disorderly walkers were detected. Some turned from the evil of their ways. Some were put away from us. Many saw it with fear, and rejoiced unto God with reverence.

"As soon as possible, the same method was used in *London*, and all other places. Evil men were detected, and reproved. They were borne with for a season. If they forsook their sins, we received them gladly: if they obstinately persisted therein, it was openly declared, that they were not of us. The rest mourned and prayed for them, and yet rejoiced, that, as far as in us lay, the scandal was rolled away from the Society.

"At first they visited each person at his own house: but this was soon found not so expedient. And that on many accounts. 1. It took up more time than most of the Leaders had to spare. 2. Many persons lived with masters, mistresses, or relations, who would not suffer them to be thus visited. 3. At the houses of those who were not so averse, they often had no opportunity of speaking to them, but in company. And this did not at all answer the end proposed, of exhorting, comforting, or reproving. 4. It frequently happened, that one affirmed what another denied. And this could not be cleared, without seeing them together. 5. Little misunderstandings and quarrels of various kinds, frequently arose among relations or neighbours; effectually to remove which it was needful to see them all face to face. Upon all these considerations it was agreed, that those of each Class should meet all together. And by this means, a more full inquiry was made, into the behaviour of every person. Those who could not be visited at home, or no otherwise than in company, had the same advantage with others. Advice or reproof was given, as need required; quarrels made up, misunderstandings removed. And after an hour or two spent in this labour of love, they concluded with prayer and thanksgiving.

"It can scarce be conceived, what advantages have been reaped from this prudential regulation. Many now happily experienced that Christian fellowship, of which they had not so much as an idea before. They began to bear one another's burthens, and naturally to care for each other. As they had daily a more intimate acquaintance with, so they had a more endeared affection for each other. And 'by speaking the truth in love, they grew up into him in all things, which is the head, even CHRIST: from whom the whole body, fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplied, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, increased unto the edifying of itself in love."

"III. About this time, I was informed, that several persons in Kingswood frequently met together at the School, and (when they could spare the time,) spent the greater part of the night in prayer, and praise, and thanksgiving. Some advised me to put an end to this: but, upon weighing the thing thoroughly, and comparing it with the practice of the ancient Christians, I could see no cause to forbid it. Rather, I believed, it might be made of more general use. So I sent them word, 'I designed to watch with them, on the Friday nearest the full moon, that we might have light thither, and back again.' I gave public notice of this the Sunday before, and withal, that I intended to preach; desiring they, and they only, would meet me there, who could do it without prejudice to their business or families. On Friday, abundance of people came. I began preaching between eight and nine: and we continued till a little beyond the noon of night, singing, praying, and praising God.

"This we have continued to do occasionally ever since, in Bristol, London, Newcastle, and most of our principal places, only, frequently beginning and concluding earlier. And exceeding great are the blessings we have found therein: it has generally been an extremely solemn season; when the word of God sunk deep into the hearts, even of those who till then knew him not. If it be said, this was only owing to the novelty of the thing, (the circumstance which still draws such multitudes together at those seasons,) or perhaps to the awful silence of the night, I am not careful to answer in this matter. Be it so: however, the impression then made on many souls, has never since been effaced. Now, allowing that God did make use either of the novelty, or any other indifferent circumstance, in order to bring sinners to repentance, yet they are brought. And herein let us rejoice together.

"Nay, may I not put the case farther yet? If I can probably conjecture, that either by the novelty of this ancient custom, or by any other indifferent circumstance, it is in my power to save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins: am I clear before God if I do it not? If I do not snatch that brand out of the burning?

"IV. As the Society increased, I found it required still greater care to separate the precious from the vile. In order to this, I determined, at least once in three months, to talk with every member myself, and to inquire at their own mouths, as well as of their leaders and neighbours, whether they grew in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. At these seasons, I likewise particularly inquire, Whether there be any misunderstanding or difference among them? That every hinderance of peace, and brotherly love, may be taken out of the way.

"To each of those, of whose seriousness and good conversation, I found no reason to doubt, I gave a testimony under my own hand, by writing their name on a ticket prepared for that purpose: every ticket implying as strong a recommendation of the person to whom it was given, as if I had writen at length, 'I believe the bearer hereof to be one that fears God, and works righteousness.'

"Those who bore these tickets, (these Συμϐολα, or *Tesseræ*, as the ancients termed them; being of just the same force with the επιϛολαι συϛατικαι, *Commendatory Letters* mentioned by the Apostle,) wherever they came, were acknowledged by their brethren, and received with all cheerfulness. These were likewise of use in other respects. By these it was easily distinguished, when the Society was to meet a-part, who were members of it, and who not. These also supplied us with a quiet and inoffensive method of removing any disorderly member. He has no new ticket, at the quarterly visitation: (for so often the tickets are changed,) and hereby it is immediately known, that he is no longer of this community.

"V. The thing which I was greatly afraid of all this time, and which I resolved to use every possible method of preventing, was, a narrowness of spirit, a party-zeal, a being straitened in our own bowels; that miserable bigotry, which makes many so unready to believe, that there is any work of God but among themselves. I thought it might be a help against this, to read the accounts I received from time to time, of the work which God is carrying on in the earth, both in our own, and other countries; not among us alone, but among those of various opinions and denominations. For this, I at first allotted one evening in every month, and afterwards did it occasionally. And I find no cause to repent my labour. It is generally a time of strong consolation to those who love God, and all mankind for his sake: as well as of breaking down the partition walls, which either the craft of the devil, or the folly of man, has built up; and of encouraging every child of God to say, (O when shall it once be?) 'Whosoever doth the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.'

"VI. By the blessing of God upon their endeavours to help one another, many found the pearl of great price. Being justified by faith, they had peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. These felt a more tender affection than before, to those who were partakers of like precious faith: and hence arose such a confidence in each other, that they poured out their souls into each other's bosom. Indeed they had great need so to do: for the war was not over, as they had supposed. But they had still to wrestle both with flesh and blood, and with principalities and powers: so that temptations were on every side: and often temptations of such a kind, as they knew not how to speak of in a Class; in which, persons of every sort, young and old, men and women, met together.

"These, therefore, wanted some means of closer union: they wanted to pour out their hearts without reserve, particularly with regard to the sin which did still easily beset them, and the temptations which were most apt to prevail over them. And they were the more desirous of this, when they observed it was the express advice of an inspired writer: 'Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another that ye may be healed:' James v. 16.

"In compliance with their desire, I divided them into smaller companies: putting married or single men, and married or single women, together. The chief Rules of the Bands, (i. e. little companies: so the old English word signifies,) are,

" In order to confess our faults one to another, and pray one for another that we may be healed, we intend,

" 1. To meet once a week, at the least:

" 2. To come punctually at the hour appointed:

" 3. To begin with singing, or prayer:

" 4. To speak, each of us in order, freely and plainly, the true state of our souls:

" 5. To desire some person among us, (thence called a Leader,) to speak his own state first, and then to ask the rest in order, as many, and as searching questions, as may be, concerning their state, sins, and temptations.

" In order to increase in them a greater sense of all God's mercies, I desired that one evening in a quarter they should all come together; that we might together eat bread, (as the ancient Christians did,) with gladness and singleness of heart. At these Love-feasts, (so we termed them, retaining the name, as well as the thing, which was in use from the beginning,*) our food is only a little plain cake and water. But we seldom return from them, without being fed, not only with meat which perisheth, but with that which endureth to everlasting life.

" Great and many are the advantages which have ever since flowed, from this closer union of the believers with each other. They prayed for one another, that they might be healed of the faults they had confest: and it was so. The chains were broken, the bonds were burst in sunder, and sin had no more dominion over them. Many were delivered from the temptations, out of which, till then they found no way to escape. They were built up in their most holy faith. They rejoiced in the Lord more abundantly. They were strengthened in love, and more effectually provoked to abound in every good work.

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* Jude 12.

" VII. And yet, while most of these, who were thus intimately joined together, went on daily from faith to faith: some fell from the faith, either all at once, by falling into known, wilful sin: or, gradually and almost insensibly, by giving way in, what are called, little things, by not watching unto prayer. The exhortations and prayers used among the believers, did no longer profit these. They wanted advice and instruction suited to their case: which, as soon as I observed, I separated them from the rest, and desired them to meet me a-part on Saturday evenings, which custom has been continued at London and Bristol to this day.

" At this hour, all the hymns, exhortations, and prayers, are adapted to their circumstances; being wholly suited to those, who did (by faith) see God, but have now lost the light of his countenance: and who mourn after Him, and refuse to be comforted, till they know, He has healed all their backslidings.

" By applying both the threats and promises of God, to these real, (not nominal) penitents, and by crying to God in their behalf, we endeavour to bring them back to the great Shepherd and Bishop of their souls: not by any of the fopperies of the Roman Church, although in some measure countenanced by antiquity. In prescribing hair-shirts, and bodily austerities, we durst not follow even the ancient Church: although we had unawares, both in dividing, οἱ πιϛοι, the believers from the rest of the Society, and in separating the penitents from them, and appointing a peculiar service for them.

" VIII. This is the plainest and clearest account I can give, of the People commonly called Methodists. It remains only, to give you a short account of those who serve their brethren in love.

" In the third part of the Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, (quoted before,) I have mentioned, how we were led to accept of Lay-Assistants. Their office is, in the absence of the Minister,

" 1. To expound every morning and evening.

" 2. To meet the united Society, the Bands, and the Penitents, once a week.

" 3. To visit the Classes once a quarter.

" 4. To hear and decide all differences.

" 5. To put the disorderly back on trial, and to receive on trial for the Bands or Society.

" 6. To see that the Stewards and Leaders faithfully discharge their several offices.

" 7. To meet the Leaders of the Bands and Classes weekly, and the Stewards, and to overlook their accounts.

" I think, he must be no fool, who has gifts sufficient for these things: as neither can he be void of the grace of God, who is able to observe the rules of an Assistant, which are these that follow:

" 1. Be diligent. Never be unemployed a moment. Never be triflingly employed. Never while away time. Neither spend any more time at any place, than is strictly necessary.

" 2. Be serious. Let your motto be, 'Holiness to the Lord.' Avoid all lightness, as you would avoid hell-fire.

" 3. Believe evil of no one. If you see it done, well: else, take heed how you credit it. Put the best construction on every thing. You know the Judge is always supposed to be on the prisoner's side.

" 4. Speak evil of no one. Else, *your* word, especially, would eat as doth a canker. Keep your thoughts within your own breast, till you come to the person concerned.

" 5. Tell every one what you think wrong in him, and that plainly, and as soon as may be. Else, it will fester in your heart. Make all haste to cast the fire out of your bosom.

" 6. Be ashamed of nothing but sin: not of hewing wood, if time permit, or drawing water.

" 7. Be punctual. Do every thing at the time.

" 8. In all things act, not according to your own will, but as a son in the Gospel, and in union with your brethren.

" I had long felt the care of the temporal affairs of the Societies a heavy burden. To assist me in bearing this, I chose out first one, then more, as prudent men as I knew, and desired them to take the charge of these things upon themselves, that I might have no incumbrance of this kind.

" The business of the Stewards is,

" 1. To manage the temporal things of the Society:

" 2. To receive the subscriptions and contributions:

" 3. To expend what is needful from time to time:

" 4. To send relief to the poor:

" 5. To keep an exact account of all receipts and expenses:

" 6. To inform the Minister if any of the Rules of the Society are not punctually observed:

" 7. To tell the Assistants, in love, if they think any thing amiss, either in their doctrine or life.

" The Rules of the Stewards are,

" 1. Be frugal. Save every thing that can be saved honestly.

" 2. Spend no more than you receive. Contract no debts.

" 3. Have no long accounts. Pay every thing within the week, or as soon as possible.

" 4. Give none that asks relief, either an ill word or an ill look. Do not hurt, if you cannot help them.—

" 5. Expect no thanks from man.

" I soon had the pleasure to find, that all these temporal things were done with the utmost faithfulness and exactness. So that my cares of this kind were at an end. I had only to revise the accounts, to tell them, if I thought any thing might be amended, and to consult how deficiencies might be supplied from time to time. For these were frequent and large, (so far were we from abundance,) the income by no means answering the expenses. But that we might not faint, sometimes we had unforeseen helps, in times of the greatest perplexity. At other times we borrowed, larger or smaller sums. Of which the greatest part has since been repaid. But we owe some hundreds of pounds to this day. So much have we *gained* by preaching the gospel!

" I think, Sir, now you know all that I know of this people. You see the nature, occasion, and design,

sign, of whatever is practiced among them. And, I trust, you may be pretty well able to answer any questions, which may be asked concerning them.

"I doubt not, but if I err in any point, you will pray God to shew me his truth. To 'have a conscience void of offence toward God and toward Man,' is the desire of,

"Rev. and dear Sir,

"Your affectionate Brother and Servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."

SECTION IX.

OF THE FORMATION OF CIRCUITS, THE INTRODUCTION OF CONFERENCES, AND THE POINTS DISCUSSED IN THEM.

THE plan on which Mr. Wesley had hitherto governed the Societies and Preachers, was manifestly imperfect; and, as the number increased, must soon have become insupportably laborious. When the Preachers at first went out to exhort and preach, it was by Mr. Wesley's permission and direction; some from one part of the kingdom, and some from another, and though frequently strangers to each other, and to those to whom they were sent, yet on his credit, and sanction alone, were they received and provided for, as friends, by the Societies, wherever they came. But, having little or no communication or intercourse with one another, nor any subordination among themselves, they must have been under the necessity of recurring to Mr. Wesley for direction, how and where they were to labour. To remedy this inconvenience, he conceived the design of calling them together to an annual Conference. By this means, he brought them into closer union with each other, and made them sensible of the utility of acting in concert and harmony. He soon found it necessary also to bring their itinerancy under certain regulations, and reduce it to some fixed order, both to prevent confusion, and for his own ease. He therefore took fifteen or twenty Societies, more or less, which lay round some principal Society, in those parts, and which were so situated, that the greatest distance from one to the other was not more than twenty miles, and united them into what is called a *Circuit*. At the yearly Conference, he appointed two, three, or four Preachers to one of these Circuits, according to its extent, which at first was often very considerable, sometimes taking in a part of three or four counties. Here, and here only, were they to labour for one year, that is, until the next Conference. One of the Preachers, on every Circuit, was called the Assistant, because he assisted Mr. Wesley in superintending the Societies and other Preachers. He took charge of the Societies within the limits assigned him, he enforced the rules every where: and directed the labours of the Preachers associated with him. Having received a list of the Societies forming his Circuit, he took his own station in it, gave to the other Preachers a plan of it, and pointed out the day, when each should be at the place fixed for him, to begin a progressive motion round it, in such order as the plan directed. They now followed one another, through all the Societies belonging to that Circuit, at stated distances of time; all being governed by the same rules, and undergoing the same labour. By this plan, every Preacher's daily work was appointed before hand; each knew, every day, where the others were, and each Society when to expect the Preacher, and how long he would stay with them.

Let it be observed, however, that Mr. Wesley's design in calling the Preachers together annually, was not merely for the regulation of the Circuits, but also for the review of their doctrines and discipline, and for the examination of their moral conduct: that those who were to administer with him, in holy things, might be *thoroughly furnished for every good work*.

The first Conference was held in June, 1744, at which Mr. Wesley met his brother, two or three other Clergymen, and a few of the Preachers, whom he had appointed to come from various parts, to confer with them on the affairs of the Societies.

" Monday, June 25," observes Mr. Wesley, "and the five following days, we spent in Conference with our Preachers, seriously considering by what means we might the most effectually save our own souls, and them that heard us. And the result of our consultations we set down to be the rule of our future practice."

Since that time, a Conference has been held annually, Mr. Wesley himself having presided at forty-seven. The subjects of their deliberations, were proposed in the form of questions, which were amply discussed, and the questions, with the answers agreed upon, were afterwards printed under the title of " Minutes of several Conversations between the Rev. Mr. Wesley and others:" commonly called *Minutes of Conference*. A few extracts from these will give the reader a clearer and fuller view of the principles and designs of Mr. Wesley, and his helpers, as also of the great work in which they were engaged, than any other document which I can lay before him. I shall confine myself to the Conversations which passed in the more early Conferences, because the grand points in respect both to doctrine and discipline were then laid down, methodised and established, which have continued even to the present day.

CONVERSATION I.

"I. It is desired, that all things be considered as in the immediate presence of God. That we may meet with a single eye, and as little children, who have every thing to learn; that every point which is proposed, may be examined to the foundation. That every person may speak freely whatever is in his heart: and that every question which arises, may be thoroughly debated and settled.

"Q. 1. Need we be fearful of doing this? What are we afraid of? Of overturning our first principles?

"A. If they are false, the sooner they are overturned, the better. If they are true, they will bear the strictest examination. Let us all pray for a willingness to receive light, to know of every doctrine, whether it be of God.

"Q. 2. How may the time of this Conference be made more eminently a time of watching unto prayer?

"A. 1. While we are conversing, let us have an especial care, to set God always before us. 2. In the intermediate hours, let us redeem all the time we can for private exercises. 3. Therein let us give ourselves to prayer for one another, and for a blessing on this our labour.

"Q. 3. How far does each of us agree to submit to the judgment of the majority?

"A. In speculative things, each can only submit so far as his judgment shall be convinced: in every practical point, each will submit so far as he can, without wounding his conscience.

"Q. 4. Can a Christian submit any farther than this, to any man, or number of men, upon earth?

"A. It is plain, he cannot: either to Bishop, Convocation, or General Council. And this is that grand principle of private judgment, on which all the Reformers proceeded: 'Every man must judge for himself; because every man must give an account of himself to God.'

"II. The Design of the meeting was proposed, namely, to consider, 1. What to teach. 2. How to teach. And, 3. What to do; i. e. How to regulate our doctrine, discipline, and practice. They began with considering the doctrine of justification: the questions relating thereto, with the substance of the answers given, were as follows.

"Q. 1. What is it to be justified?

"A. To be pardoned, and received into God's favour; into such a state, that if we continue therein, we shall be finally saved.

"Q. 2. Is faith the condition of justification?

"A. Yes; for every one who believeth not, is condemned; and every one who believes, is justified.

"Q. 3. But must not repentance, and works meet for repentance, go before this faith?

"A. Without doubt: if by repentance you mean conviction of sin; and by works meet for repentance, obeying God as far as we can, forgiving our brother, ceasing to do evil, doing good, and using the ordinances according to the power we have received.

" Q. 4. What is faith ?

" A. Faith in general is, a divine, supernatural ελεγχος* of things not seen ; i. e. of past, future, or spiritual things : it is a spiritual sight of God, and the things of God.

" First, a sinner is convinced by the Holy Ghost, ' Christ loved me, and gave himself for me.'—This is that faith by which he is justified or pardoned, the moment he receives it. Immediately the same Spirit bears witness, ' Thou art pardoned : thou hast redemption in his blood.'—And this is saving faith, whereby the love of God is shed abroad in his heart.

" Q. 5. Have all Christians this faith ? May not a man be justified and not know it ?

" A. That all true Christians have such a faith as implies an assurance of God's love, appears from, Rom. viii. 15, 16, ' For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear ; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.' Eph. iv. 32, ' And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.' 2 Cor. xiii. 5, ' Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith ; prove your ownselves, know ye not your ownselves, *how* that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates ?' Heb. viii. 10, ' For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord : I

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*Conviction, or Evidence.

will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.' See also, 1 John iv. 13, and v. 19. And that no man can be justified, and not know it, appears farther from the nature of the thing. For faith after repentance, is ease after pain, rest after toil, light after darkness. It appears also from the immediate, as well as distant fruits thereof.

"Q. 6. What are the immediate fruits of justifying faith?

"A. Peace, joy, love, power over all outward sin, and power to keep down inward sin.

"Q. 7. Does any one believe, who has not the witness in himself, or any longer than he sees, loves, and obeys God?

"A. We apprehend not: *seeing God* being the very essence of faith; love and obedience, the inseparable properties of it.

"Q. 8. What sins are consistent with justifying faith?

"A. No *wilful sin*. If a believer *wilfully sins*, he casts away his faith. Neither is it possible he should have *justifying faith* again, without previously *repenting*.

"Q. 9. *Must* every believer come into a state of doubt, or fear, or darkness? Will he do so, unless by ignorance or unfaithfulness? Does God otherwise withdraw himself?

"A. It is certain, a believer *need* never again come into condemnation. It seems, he need not come into a state of doubt, or fear, or darkness: and that (ordinarily at least) he *will* not, unless by ignorance or unfaithfulness. Yet it is true, That the first joy does seldom last long: that it is commonly followed by doubts and fears: and that God frequently permits great heaviness before any large manifestation of himself.

"Q. 10. Are works necessary to the continuance of faith?

"A. Without doubt; for a man may forfeit the free gift of God, either by sins of omission or commission.

"Q. 11. Can faith be lost, but for want of works?

"A. It cannot, but through disobedience.

"Q. 12. How is faith *made perfect by works?*

"A. The more we exert our faith, the more it is increased. To him that hath, shall be given.

"Q. 13. St. Paul says, Abraham was *not justified by works.* St. James, he was *justified by works.* Do they not contradict each other?

"A. No: 1. Because they do not speak of the same justification. St. Paul speaks of that justification which was when Abraham was seventy-five years old, above twenty years before Isaac was born. St. James of that justification, which was when he offered up Isaac on the altar.

"2dly. Because they do not speak of the same works: St. Paul speaking of works that precede faith: St. James, of works that spring from it.

"Q. 14. In what sense is Adam's sin imputed to all mankind?

"A. In Adam all die; i. e. 1. Our bodies then became mortal. 2. Our souls died, i. e. were disunited from God. And, hence, 3. We are all born with a sinful, devilish nature: by reason whereof, 4. We are children of wrath, liable to death eternal. Rom. v. 13. Eph. ii. 3.

" Q. 15. In what sense is the righteousness of Christ imputed to all mankind, or to believers?

" A. We do not find it expressly affirmed in Scripture, That God imputes the righteousness of Christ to any. Although we do find, That faith is imputed to us for righteousness.

" That text, ' As by one man's disobedience all men were made sinners, so by the obedience of one, all were made righteous,' we conceive means, by the merits of Christ, all men are cleared from the guilt of Adam's actual sin.

" We conceive farther, That through the obedience and death of Christ, 1. The bodies of all men become immortal after the resurrection. 2. Their souls receive a capacity of spiritual life: and, 3. An actual spark of seed thereof: 4. All believers become children of grace, reconciled to God; and, 5. Are made partakers of the divine nature.

" Q. 16. Have we not leaned towards Antinomianism?

" A. We are afraid we have.

" Q. 17. What is Antinomianism?

" A. The doctrine which makes void the law through faith.

" Q. 18. What are the main pillars thereof?

" A. 1. That Christ abolished the moral law. 2. That therefore Christians are not obliged to observe it. 3. That one branch of Christian liberty, is liberty from obeying the commandments of God. 4. That it is bondage, to do a thing because it is commanded, or forbear it, because it is forbidden. 5. That a believer is not obliged to use the ordinances of God, or to do good works. 6. That a Preacher ought not to exhort to good works: not unbelievers, because it is hurtful; not believers, because it is needless.

"III. Q. 1. Is a sense of God's pardoning love absolutely necessary to our being in his favour? Or may there be some exempt cases?

"A. We dare not say, There are not.

"Q. 2. Is it necessary to inward and outward holiness?

"A. We incline to think it is.

"Q. 3. Does a man believe any longer than he sees a reconciled God?

"A. We conceive not. But we allow there may be infinite degrees in beholding God as reconciled. Even as many as there are between him who sees the sun, when it shines on his eye-lids closed, and him who stands with his eyes wide open in the full blaze of its beams.

"Q. 4. Does a man believe any longer than he loves God?

"A. In no wise. 'For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails, without faith, working by love.

"Q. 5. Have we duly considered the case of Cornelius? Was not he in the favour of God, 'when his prayers and alms came up for a memorial before God?' i. e. before he believed in Christ?

"A. It does seem that he was, in some degree. But we speak not of those who have not heard the Gospel.

"Q. 6. Is a believer constrained to obey God?

"A. At first he often is. The love of Christ constraineth him. After this, he may obey, or he may not; no constraint being laid upon him.

"Q. 7. Can

" Q. 7. Can faith be lost, but through disobedience?

" A. It cannot. A believer first inwardly disobeys, inclines to sin with his heart: then his intercourse with God is cut off, i. e. his faith is lost. And after this, he may fall into outward sin, being now weak, and like another man.

" Q. 8. How can such a one recover faith?

" A. By repenting, and doing the first works, Rev. ii. 5.

" Q. 9. Do we ordinarily represent a justified state, so great and happy as it is?

" A. Perhaps not. A believer, walking in the light, is inexpressibly great and happy.

" Q. 10. Should we not have a care of depreciating justification, in order to exalt the state of full sanctification?

" A. Undoubtedly we should beware of this; for one may insensibly slide into it.

" Q. 11. How shall we effectually avoid it?

" A. When we are going to speak of intire sanctification, let us first describe the blessings of a justified state, as strongly as possible.

" IV. Q. 1. What is sincerity?

" A. Willingness to know, and to do the whole will of God. The lowest species thereof seems to be *faithfulness in that which is little.*

" Q. 2. Has God any regard to man's sincerity?

" A. So far, that no man in any state can possibly please God, without it: nor, indeed, in any moment wherein he is not sincere.

" Q. 3. But can it be conceived, that God has any regard to the sincerity of an unbeliever?

" A. Yes,

" A. Yes, so much, that if he persevere therein, God will infallibly give him faith.

" Q. 4. What regard may we conceive him to have, to the sincerity of a believer?

" A. So much, that in every sincere believer, he fulfils all the great and precious promises.

" Q. 5. Whom do you term a *sincere believer?*

" A. One that walks in the light, as God is in the light.

" Q. 6. Is not sincerity all in all?

" A. All will follow persevering sincerity. God gives every thing with it; nothing without it.

" Q. 7. Are not then sincerity and faith equivalent terms?

" A. By no means. It is at least as nearly related to works, as it is to faith. For example: who is sincere before he believes? He that, according to the power he has received, brings forth *fruits meet for repentance.* Who is sincere after he believes? He that, from a sense of God's love, is zealous of all good works.

" Q. 8. But do you consider, That we are under the covenant of grace? And that the covenant of works is now abolished?

" A. All mankind were under the covenant of grace, from the very hour that the original promise was made. If, by the covenant of works, you mean, That of unsinning obedience made with Adam before the fall: no man, but Adam, was ever under that covenant.

" V. Q. 1. Is not the whole dispute,—of salvation by faith, or by works, a mere *strife of words?*

" A. In asserting salvation by faith, we mean this: 1. That pardon, (salvation begun,) is received by faith, producing works. 2. That holiness, (salvation continued,) is by faith working by love. 3. That heaven, (salvation finished,) is the reward of this faith.

" If those who assert salvation by works, or by faith and works, mean the same thing, (understanding by faith, the revelation of Christ in us; by salvation, pardon, holiness, glory,) we will not strive with them at all. If they do not, this is not a *strife of words:* but the very vitals, the essence of christianity is the thing in question.

" Q. 2. May not some degree of the love of God go before a distinct sense of justification?

" A. We believe it may.

" VI. The doctrine of sanctification was considered: with regard to which, the questions asked, and the substance of the answers given, were as follows.

" Q. 1. What is it to be sanctified?

" A. To be renewed in the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness.

" Q. 2. Is faith the condition, or the instrument of sanctification?

" A. It is both the condition and instrument of it. When we begin to believe, then sanctification begins. And as faith increases, holiness increases, till we are created anew.

" Q. 3. What is implied in being *a perfect Christian?*

" A. The loving the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our mind, and soul, and strength. Deut. vi. 5. xxx. 6. Ezek. xxxvi. 25—29.

" Q. 4. Does this imply, That all inward sin is taken away?

" A. Without doubt: or how could he be said to be saved *from all his uncleannesses?* Ezek. xxxvi. 29.

" Q. 5. Can we know one who is thus saved? What is a reasonable proof?

" A. We cannot, without the miraculous discernment of spirits, be infallibly certain of those who are thus saved. But we apprehend, these would be the best proofs which the nature of the thing admits: 1. If we had sufficient evidence of their unblamable behaviour preceding. 2. If they gave a distinct account of the time and manner wherein they were saved from sin, and of the circumstances thereof, with such sound speech as could not be reproved. And, 3. If, upon a strict inquiry afterwards from time to time, it appeared that all their tempers, and words, and actions, were holy and unreprovable.

" Q. 6. How should we treat those who think they have attained this?

" A. Exhort them to forget the things that are behind, and to watch and pray always, that God may search the ground of their hearts.

" VII. Q. 1. How much is allowed by our brethren who differ from us, with regard to entire sanctification?

" A. They grant, 1. That every one must be entirely sanctified in the article of death. 2. That till then, a believer daily grows in grace, comes nearer and nearer to perfection. 3. That we ought to be continually pressing after this, and to exhort all others so to do.

" Q. 2. What do we allow them?

" A. We grant, 1. That many of those who have died in the faith, yea, the greater part of those we have known, were not sanctified throughout, not made perfect in love, till a little before death: 2. That the term 'sanctified,' is continually applied by St. Paul, to all that were justified, that were true believers: 3. That by this term alone, he rarely (if ever) means, saved from all sin: 4. That, consequently, it is not proper to use it in this sense, without adding the word, 'Wholly, intirely,' or the like: 5. That the inspired writers almost continually speak of or to those who were justified; but very rarely, either of or to those who were wholly sanctified: 6. That, consequently, it behoves us to speak in public, almost continually, of the state of justification; but more rarely, in full and explicit terms, concerning entire sanctification.

" Q. 3. What then is the point wherein we divide?

" A. It is this: whether we should expect to be saved from all sin, before the article of death?

" Q. 4. Is there any clear Scripture *promise* of this? That God will save us from *all* sin?

" A. There is. Psalm cxxx. 8, *He shall redeem Israel from* all *his iniquities.*

" This is more largely expressed in the prophecy of Ezekiel: 'Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols I will cleanse you:—I will also save you from all your uncleanness,' xxxvi. 25, 29. No promise can be more clear. And to this the Apostle plainly refers in that exhortation, 'Having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God,' 2 Cor. vii. 1. Equally clear and express is that ancient promise, 'The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul,' Deut. xxx. 6.

" Q. 5. But does any *assertion* answerable to this, occur in the New Testament ?

" A. There does, and that laid down in the plainest terms. So, 1 John iii. 8, ' For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil :' the works of the devil, without any limitation or restriction : but all sin is the work of the devil. Parallel to which is that assertion of St. Paul, Eph. v. 25, 27, ' Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it,—that he might present it to himself, a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy, and without blemish.'

" And to the same effect is his assertion in Rom. viii. 3, 4, ' God sent his Son,—that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.'

" Q. 6. Does the New Testament afford any farther ground for expecting to be saved from all sin ?

" A. Undoubtedly it does, both in those prayers and commands which are equivalent to the strongest assertions.

" Q. 7. What prayers do you mean ?

" A. Prayers for entire sanctification ; which, were there no such thing, would be mere mockery of God. Such, in particular, are, 1. *Deliver us from evil ;* or rather, απο τȣ πονηρȣ· *from the evil one.* Now, when this is done, when we are delivered from all evil, there can be no sin remaining. 2. ' Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word : that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee: that they also may be one in us: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one,' John xvii. 20, 21, 23. 3. 'I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he would grant you,—that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God,' Eph. iii. 14, 16—19. 4. 'The very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And I pray God, your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,' Thess. v. 23.

"Q. 8. What commands are there to the same effect?

"A. 1. 'Be ye perfect as your Father which is in heaven is perfect,' Matt. v. ult. 2. 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind,' Matt.x xii. 37. But if the love of God fill all the heart, there can be no sin there.

"Q. 9. But how does it appear, that this is to be done before the article of death?

"A. First, from the very nature of a command, which is not given to the dead, but to the living. Therefore, 'Thou shalt love God with all thy heart,' cannot mean, Thou shalt do this when thou diest, but while thou livest.

"Secondly, from express texts of Scripture: 1. 'The grace of God, that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men; teaching us, that having renounced, (αρνησαμενοι,) ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world: looking for—the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity; and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works,' Tit. ii. 11—14. 2. 'He hath raised up a horn of salvation for us—to perform the mercy promised to our fathers; the oath which he sware to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life,' Luke i. 69, &c.

"Q. 10. Is there any example in Scripture of persons who had attained to this?

"A. Yes, St. John, and all those of whom he says in his first Epistle, iv. 17, 'Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world.'

"Q. 11. Does not the preaching perfection with harshness, tend to bring believers into a kind of bondage, or slavish fear:

"A. It does. Therefore, we should always place it in the most amiable light, so that it may excite only hope, joy, and desire.

"Q. 12. Why may we not continue in the joy of faith even till we are made perfect?

"A. Why, indeed? Since holy grief does not quench this joy: since even while we are under the cross, while we deeply partake of the sufferings of Christ, we may rejoice with joy unspeakable.

"Q. 13. Do we not discourage believers from rejoicing evermore?

" A. We ought not so to do. Let them all their life long rejoice unto God, so it be with reverence. And even if lightness or pride should mix with their joy, let us not strike at the joy itself, (this is the gift of God,) but at that lightness or pride, that the evil may cease, and the good remain.

" Q. 14. But ought we not to be *troubled*, on account of the sinful nature which still remains in us?

" A. It is good for us to have a deep sense of this, and to be much ashamed before the Lord. But this should only incite us, the more earnestly to turn unto Christ every moment, and to draw light, and life, and strength, from him, that we may go on conquering and to conquer.

" VIII. Q. 1. In what view may we, and our *helpers*, be considered?

" A. Perhaps as extraordinary messengess, (i. e. out of the ordinary way,) designed, 1. To provoke the regular ministers to jealousy. 2. To supply their lack of service, toward those who are perishing for want of knowledge.

" Q. 2. What is the office of a *Helper*?

" A. To feed and guide the flock. To save souls: to spend, and be spent in this work; to go always, not only to those that want him, but to those that want him most.

" Observe. It is not his business, to preach so many times, and to take care of this or that Society, merely; but to save as many souls as he can; to bring as many sinners as he possibly can to repentance, and with all his power to build them up in that holiness, without which they cannot see the Lord.

" IX. Q. What general method of employing our time would you advise us to?

" A. We advise you, 1. As often as possible to rise at four. 2. From four to five in the morning, and from five to six in the evening, to meditate, pray, and read, partly the Scriptures with the Notes, partly the closely practical parts of what we have published. 3. From six in the morning till twelve, (allowing an hour for breakfast,) to read in order, with much prayer, first the Christian Library, and the other books which we have published in prose and verse, and then those which we have recommended.

" In the afternoon, follow Mr. Baxter's plan: that is, Go into *every house* in course, and teach *every one* therein, young and old, if they belong to us, to be Christians, inwardly and outwardly.

" Make every particular plain to their understanding; fix it in their memory; write it in their heart. In order to this, there must be *line upon line, precept upon precept*. What patience, what love, what knowledge, is requisite for this?

" X. Q. 1. Are we not Dissenters?

" A. No: Although we call sinners to repentance *in all places* of God's dominion; and although we frequently use *extemporary prayer*, and unite together in *a religious Society;* yet we are not Dissenters in the only sense which our law acknowledges, namely, persons who renounce the service of the church. We do not renounce it, and therefore, strictly speaking, are not Dissenters.

" Q. 2. But what reasons are there, why we should not separate from the Church?

" A. Among others, those which have been already printed, entitled, ' Reasons against a separation from the Church of England.'

" We allow two exceptions, 1. If the Parish Minister be a notoriously wicked man: 2. If he preach Socinianism, Arianism, or any other essentially false doctrine.

" XI. Q. 1. How shall we try those who think they are moved by the Holy Ghost to preach?

" A. Inquire, 1. Do they know God as a pardoning God? Have they the love of God abiding in them? Do they desire and seek nothing but God? And are they holy in all manner of conversation? 2. Have they *gifts*, (as well as *grace*,) for the work? Have they, (in some tolerable degree,) a clear, sound understanding? Have they a right judgment in the things of God? Have they a just conception of salvation by faith? And has God given them any degree of utterance? Do they speak justly, readily, clearly? 3. Have they *fruit?* Are any truly convinced of sin, and converted to God, by their preaching?

" As long as these three marks concur in any one, we believe he is called of God to preach. These we receive as sufficient proofs, that he is *moved thereto by the Holy Ghost*.

" Q. 2. What method may we use in receiving a new Helper.

" A. A proper time for doing this, is at a Conference, after solemn fasting and prayer.

" Every person proposed is then to be present; and each of them may be asked,

" Have *you* faith in Christ? Are you *going on to perfection?* Do you expect to be *perfected in love in this life?* Are you groaning after it? Are you resolved to devote yourself wholly to God, and to his work? Have you considered the rules of a *Helper?* Will you keep them for conscience' sake? Are you determined to employ *all* your time in the work of God? Will you preach every morning and evening? Will you diligently instruct the children in every place? Will you visit from house to house? Will you recommend fasting, both by precept and example?

"We may then receive him as a probationer, by giving him the Minutes of the Conference, inscribed thus: 'To *A. B.* You think it your duty to call sinners to repentance. Make full proof hereof, and we shall rejoice to receive you as a fellow-labourer.' Let him then read, and carefully weigh what is contained therein, that if he has any doubt, it may be removed.

"When he has been on trial four years, if recommended by the Assistant, he may be received into full connection."

It may be useful to add a few remarks on the method pursued in the choice of Itinerant Preachers, as many have formed the most erroneous ideas on the subject, imagining they are employed with hardly any prior preparation. 1. They are received as private members of the Society, on trial. 2. After a quarter of a year, if they are found deserving, they are admitted as proper members. 3. When their grace and abilities are sufficiently manifest, they are appointed Leaders of Classes. 4. If they then discover talents for more important services, they are employed to exhort occasionally, in the smaller congregations, when the Preachers cannot attend. 5. If approved in this line of duty, they are allowed to preach. 6. Out of these men, who are called *Local Preachers*, are selected the *Itinerant Preachers*, who are first proposed at a Quarterly Meeting of the Stewards and Local Preachers of the Circuit; then at a meeting of the Travelling Preachers of the District, and, lastly, in the Conference, and, if accepted, are nominated for a Circuit. 7. Their characters and conduct are examined annually in the Conference: and if they continue faithful for four years of trial, they are received into full connection. At these Conferences, also, strict inquiry is made into the conduct and success of every Preacher: and those who are found deficient in abilities, are no longer employed as Itinerants; while those whose conduct has not been agreeable to the Gospel, are expelled, and thereby deprived of all the privileges even of private members of the Society.

SECTION X.

OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE METHODISTS.

BY the above extracts from the *Minutes of the Conferences*, as well as by all the proceeding pages, the reader may form a pretty just idea of the nature of the Methodist doctrine; but he will have a much more clear and full view of it, if he will carefully read over Mr. Wesley's Sermons, especially the first four volumes, which were published with the express design of submitting this doctrine to the consideration of mankind. "The following Sermons," says he, in the Preface to the first volume, (published in the year 1747,) "contain the substance of what I have been preaching for between eight and nine years last past. During that time I have frequently spoken in public, on every subject in the ensuing Collection: and I am not conscious that there is any one point of doctrine, on which I am accustomed to speak in public, which is not here incidentally, if not professedly, laid before every Christian reader. Every man, who peruses these, will therefore see, in the clearest manner, what these doctrines are, which I embrace and teach, as the essentials of true religion."

The reader, therefore, that would form a true judgment of the Methodist doctrine, should, in all reason, carefully peruse these sermons. And, surely no person is justified in censuring our principles till he has, at least, been at this little trouble. But for the information of those who either are not possessed of these volumes of sermons, or not at leisure to peruse them, I will here insert that summary account of his doctrine, which Mr. Wesley has given us in the beginning of the first part of his *Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*, where he has demonstrated it to be the very doctrine of the Church of England, as set forth in her Liturgy, Articles, and Homilies.

"All I teach," says Mr. Wesley, (Farther Appeal, p. 3.) "respects either the nature and condition of Justification, the nature and condition of Salvation, the nature of justifying and saving Faith, or the Author of Faith and Salvation.

"1. The nature of justification. It sometimes means our acquittal at the last day. Mat. xii. 37. But this is altogether out of the present question: for that justification whereof our Articles and Homilies speak, signifies present forgiveness, pardon of sins, and consequently,

sequently, acceptance with God: who therein, (Rom. iii. 25,) *declares his righteousness*, or justice and mercy, by or *for the remission of the sins that are past*, saying, *I will be merciful to thy unrighteousness, and thine iniquities I will remember no more.*

"I believe, (Rom. iv. 5, &c.) the condition of this, is Faith: I mean, not only, that without faith, we cannot be justified; but also, that as soon as any one has true faith, in that moment he is justified.

"Luke vi. 43. Good works follow this faith, but cannot go before it: much less can sanctification, which implies, a continued course of good works, springing from holiness of heart. But it is allowed, that entire sanctification goes before our justification at the last day, Heb. xii. 14.

"It is allowed also, that, (Mark i. 15,) Repentance, and (Mat. iii. 8.) fruits meet for repentance, go before faith. Repentance absolutely must go before faith: fruits meet for it, if there be opportunity. By repentance, I mean conviction of sin, producing real desires and sincere resolutions of amendment: and by *fruits meet for repentance*, (Mat. vi. 14, 15,) forgiving our brother, (Luke iii. 4—9, &c.) ceasing from evil, doing good, (Mat. vii. 7,) using the ordinances of God, and in general, (Mat. xxv. 29,) obeying him according to the measure of grace which we have received. But these I cannot, as yet, term *good works;* because they do not spring from faith, and the love of God.

"By salvation I mean, not barely, according to the vulgar notion, deliverance from hell, or going to heaven: but a present deliverance from sin, a restoration of the soul to its primitive health, its original purity; a recovery of the divine nature: the renewal of our souls after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness, in justice, mercy, and truth. This implies all holy and heavenly tempers, and, by consequence, all holiness of conversation.

" Now, if by salvation we mean a present salvation from sin, we cannot say, holiness is the condition of it. For it is the thing itself. Salvation, in this sense, and holiness, are synonymous terms. We must, therefore, say, 'We are saved by faith.' Faith is the condition of this salvation. For without faith we cannot be thus saved. But whosoever believeth, is saved already.

" Without faith we cannot be thus saved. For we cannot rightly serve God, unless we love him. And we cannot love him, unless we know him: neither can we know God, unless by faith. Therefore, *Salvation by Faith*, is only, in other words, the love of God by the knowledge of God: or, the recovery of the image of God, by a true spiritual acquaintance with him.

" 3. Faith in general, is, a divine, supernatural ελεγχος* of things not seen, not discoverable by our bodily senses, as being either past, future, or spiritual. Justifying faith implies not only a divine ελεγχος, that God was in Christ, *reconciling the world unto himself*, but a sure trust and confidence, that Christ died for my sins, that he loved me and gave himself for me. And the moment a penitent sinner believes this, God pardons and absolves him.

" And as soon as his pardon or justification is witnessed to him by the Holy Ghost, he is saved. He loves God, and all mankind. He has *the mind*

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*Evidence, or Conviction.

that was in Christ, and power to *walk as he also walked.* From that time (unless he make shipwreck of the faith,) salvation gradually increases in his soul. For, ‘ so is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground.—And it springeth up, first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.’

“ 4. The Author of faith and salvation is God alone. It is he that works in us both to will and to do. He is the sole giver of every good gift, and the sole author of every good work. There is no more of power than of merit in man: but as all merit is in the Son of God, in what he has done and suffered for us, so all power is in the Spirit of God. And therefore every man, in order to believe unto salvation, mut receive the Holy Ghost. This is essentially necessary to every Christian, not in order to his working miracles, but in order to faith, peace, joy, and love, the ordinary fruits of the Spirit.

“ Although no man on earth can explain the *particular manner*, wherein the Spirit of God works on the soul, yet whosoever has these fruits, cannot but know and *feel* that God has wrought them in his heart.

“ Sometimes he acts more particularly on the Understanding, opening or *enlightening* it, (as the Scripture speaks,) and *revealing*, unveiling, discovering, to us *the deep things of God.*

“ Sometimes he acts on the Will and Affections of men: withdrawing them from evil, inclining them to good, inspiring (breathing, as it were,) good thoughts into them: so it has frequently been expressed, by an easy, natural metaphor, strictly analogous to רוח, *πνευμα*, *Spiritus*, and the words used in the most modern tongues also, to denote the Spirit of God. But however it be expressed, it is certain, all true Faith, and the whole work of Salvation, every good thought, word, and work, is altogether by the operation of the Holy Spirit.

"6. In order to be clearly and fully satisfied, what the doctrine of the Church of England is, as it stands opposed to the doctrine of the Antinomians, on the one hand, and to that of justification by works, on the other, I will simply set down what occurs on this head, either in her Liturgy, Articles, or Homilies.

'Spare thou them, O God, which *confess their faults:* restore thou them that are *penitent*, according to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesu, our Lord.

'He pardoneth and absolveth all them that *truly repent*, and *unfeignedly believe* his holy gospel.

'Almighty God—hath promised forgiveness of sins to all them, that, with *hearty repentance, and true faith*, turn unto him.' Communion-Office.

'Give him unfeigned *repentance* and steadfast *faith*, that his sins may be blotted out.' Ibid.

"As earnestly, therefore, as our Church inculcates justification by faith alone, she nevertheless supposes repentance to be previous to faith, and *fruits meet for repentance:* yea, and universal holiness to be previous to final justification, as evidently appears from the following words:

'Let us beseech him, that the rest of our life may be pure and holy, so that at the last we may come to his eternal joy.' Absolution.

'May we seriously apply our hearts to that holy and heavenly wisdom here, which may in the end bring us to life everlasting.' Visitation of the sick.

'Raise us from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness,—that at the last day we may be found acceptable in thy sight.' Burial Office.

'If we from henceforth walk in his ways,—seeking always his glory, Christ will set us on his right hand.' Commination Office.

"7. We come next to the Articles of our church: the former part of the ninth runs thus:

'*OF ORIGINAL OR BIRTH-SIN.*

'ORIGINAL sin,—is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man,—whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit: and therefore, in every person born into this world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation.'

'*ART. X. OF FREE-WILL.*

'THE condition of man, after the fall of Adam, is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works to faith, and calling upon God. Wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will.'

'*ART. XI. OF THE JUSTIFICATION OF MAN.*

'WE are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings.

Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is expressed in the Homily of Justification.'

"I believe this Article relates to the *meritorious cause* of Justification, rather than to the condition of it. On this therefore I do not build any thing concerning it, but on those that follow.

'ART. XII. OF GOOD WORKS.

'ALBEIT that good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins,—yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith: insomuch, that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known, as a tree may be known by the fruit.'

"We are taught here, 1. That good works in general, follow after justification. 2. That they spring out of a true and lively faith, that faith whereby we are justified. 3. That true, justifying faith may be as evidently known by them, as a tree discerned by the fruit.

"Does it not follow, That the supposing any good work to go before justification, is full as absurd as the supposing an apple, or any other fruit, to grow before the tree?

"But let us hear the Church, speaking yet more plainly.

'ART. XIII. OF WORKS DONE BEFORE JUSTIFICATION.

'WORKS done before the grace of Christ, and the inspiration of his Spirit, (i. e. before justification, as the title expresses it,) are not pleasant to God, forasmuch as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ,—yea, rather, for that they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have the nature of sin.'

" Now, if all works done before justification, have the nature of sin, (both because they spring not of faith in Christ, and because they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done,) what becomes of sanctification previous to justification? It is utterly excluded: seeing whatever is previous to justification, is not good or holy, but evil and sinful.

" Although, therefore, our Church does frequently assert, that we ought to repent and bring forth fruits meet for repentance, if ever we would attain to that faith, whereby alone we are justified; yet she never asserts, that these are good works, so long as they are previous to justification. Nay, she expressly asserts the direct contrary, viz. 'That they have all the nature of sin.'

" It remains to consider, what occurs in the Homilies on these subjects.

' *OF THE SALVATION OF MANKIND.*

" 1. Because all men are sinners against God, and breakers of his law, therefore can no man by his works be justified, and made righteous before God. But every man is constrained to seek for another righteousness, or justification, to be received at God's own hand. And this justification, or righteousness, which we receive of God's mercy, and Christ's merits embraced by faith, is taken, accepted, and allowed of God, for our perfect and full justification.—This is that justification, or righteousness, which St. Paul speaketh of, when he saith, Gal. ii. 16; 'No man is justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ.' And again, 'We are justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law, shall no flesh be justified.'

"2. The great wisdom of God, in this mystery of our redemption, hath tempered his justice and mercy together. His mercy he sheweth, in delivering us from our captivity, without requiring any ransom to be paid, or amends to be made on our parts: which thing by us had been impossible to be done. And whereas it lay not in us to do that, he provided a ransom for us, that was, the precious body and blood of his own Son, who, besides this ransom, fulfilled the law perfectly, and so manifesting the justice of God, as well as his mercy, accomplished the great mystery of our redemption.

"3. Of this justice and mercy of God knit together, speaketh St. Paul, in the third chapter to the Romans: 'All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God: but are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood.' And in the 10th, 'Christ is the end of the law, for righteousness to every one that believeth:' and in the 8th chapter, 'that which was impossible by the law, insomuch as it is weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.'

"4. In these places the Apostle toucheth especially three things, which must go together in our justification. Upon God's part, his great mercy and grace; upon Christ part, the satisfaction of God's justice, by the offering his body, and shedding his blood, with fulfilling of the law perfectly and thoroughly; and upon our part, a true and lively faith in the merits of Jesus Christ. So that in our justification there is not only God's mercy and grace, but his justice also. And so the grace of God doth not shut out the righteousness of God in our justification; but only shutteth out the righteousness of man; that is to say, the righteousness of our works.

" 5. And therefore, St. Paul declareth nothing on the behalf of man, concerning his justification, but only a true and lively faith, which itself is the gift of God. And yet that faith doth not shut out repentance, hope, love, and the fear of God, to be joined with faith in every man that is justified. But it shutteth them out from the office of justifying. So that, although they be all present together in him that is justified, yet they justify not all together.

" 6. Neither doth faith shut out good works, necessarily to be done afterwards, of duty towards God: (for we are most bounden to serve God, in doing good works, commanded in Scripture, all the days of our life.) But we may not do them to this intent, to be justified by doing them. For all the good works we can do, are not able to deserve our justification: but our justification cometh freely of the mere mercy of God; and of so great and free mercy, that whereas all the world was not able to pay any part towards their ransom, it pleased him, without any of our deserving, to prepare for us the most precious jewels of Christ's body and blood, whereby our ransom might be paid, the law fulfilled, and his justice satisfied. So that Christ is now the righteousness of all them that truly believe in him. He for them paid their ransom by his death. He for them fulfilled the law in his life; so that now in him, and by him, every christian may be called a fulfiller of the law. Forasmuch as that which their infirmity lacked, Christ's righteousness hath supplied.

"7. Ye have heard, that no man can be justified by his own works, inasmuch as no man fulfilleth the law: and St. Paul, in his epistle to the Galatians, proveth the same, saying, 'If there had been a law given which could have justified, verily righteousness should have been by the law.' And again: 'if righteousness came by the law, then is Christ dead in vain.' And to the Ephesians he saith, (chap. ii.) 'By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.' And to be short, the sum of all Paul's disputation is this, 'If righteousness come of works, then it cometh not of grace: and if it come of grace, then it cometh not of works.' And to this end tend all the prophets, as St. Peter saith, (Acts x. 43,) 'To him give all the Prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins.'

"8. And that we are justified only by this true and lively faith in Christ, speak all the ancient authors; especially, St. Cyprian, Origen, St. Chrysostom, Hilary, Basil, St. Ambrose, and St. Augustine: by which they take away clearly all merit of our works, and wholly ascribe our justification unto Christ only. This faith, the holy Scripture teacheth us, is the strong rock and foundation of the Christian religion. This doctrine all ancient authors of Christ's church do approve. This doctrine setteth forth the true glory of Christ, and beateth down all vain glory of man. This, whosoever denieth, is not to be accounted for a Christian man, nor for a setter forth of Christ's glory, but an adversary to Christ, and his gospel, and for a setter forth of man's vain glory.

" 9. But that this true doctrine of justification by faith may be truly understood, observe, that justification is the office of God only; and is not a thing which we tender to him, but which we receive of him by his free mercy, through the only merits of his beloved Son. And the true sense of this doctrine, 'We are justified freely by faith without works, or we are justified by faith in Christ only,' is not, that this our own act *to believe in* Christ, or this our faith in Christ, which is within us, doth justify us; (for that were to account ourselves to be justified by some act or virtue that is within ourselves,) but that, although we have faith, hope, and charity within us, and do never so many works thereunto; yet we must renounce the merit of all, of faith, hope, and charity, and all other virtues and good works, which we either have done, shall do, or can do,, as far too weak to deserve our justification: for which, therefore, we must trust only in God's mercy, and the sacrifice which Christ offered for us on the cross.

" 10. As then John the Baptist, as great and godly a man as he was, yet in this matter of forgiving sin, put the people from himself, and pointed them to Christ, saying, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world:' even so, as great and godly a virtue as faith is, it putteth us from itself, and pointeth us to Christ, to have only by him remission of sins or justification. So that our faith, as it were, saith unto us thus: ‘ It is not I that taketh away your sins. It is Christ only; and to him alone I send you for that purpose; forsaking all your good virtues, words, thoughts, and works, putting your trust in Christ only.’

“ 11. And in truth, neither our faith nor our works do justify us; that is, deserve remission of sins: but God himself doth justify us, of his own mercy, through the merits of his Son only. Nevertheless, because by faith given us of God, we embrace the promise of God's mercy, and of the remission of our sins: therefore the Scripture saith, ‘ that faith doth justify, faith without works.’ And, as it is all one to say, ‘ faith without works, and, only faith doth justify us,’ therefore the ancient fathers, from time to time, speak thus; *only faith justifieth us;* meaning no other than St Paul means, when he saith, ‘ Faith without works justifieth us.’ And because this is wrought through the only merits of Christ, and not through our merits, or through the merit or any virtue we have within us, or of any work that cometh from us; therefore, in that respect, we renounce, as it were again, faith, works, and all other virtues. For our corruption through original sin is so great, that all our faith, charity, words, and works, cannot merit, or deserve any part of our justification for us. And therefore we thus speak, humbling ourselves to God, and giving to our Saviour Christ all the glory of our justification.

“ 12. To justify then, is the office of God to man. Our office and duty to God is, not to pass our time sinfully or unfruitfully: for this were to serve the devil, and not God. For that faith which bringeth not forth repentance, but either evil works, or no good works, is not a pure and living faith, but a dead and devilish one, as St. Paul and St. James call it. For even the devils believe, ‘ That Christ was born of a virgin; that he wrought all kinds of miracles, declaring himself very God: that for our sakes he suffered a most painful death, to redeem us from death everlasting: that he rose again the third day: that he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father, and at the end of the world shall come again to judge both the quick and the dead.’ These articles of our faith the devils believe, and so they believe all that is written in the Old and New Testament. And yet for all this faith, they be but devils. They remain still in their damnable estate, lacking the very true Christian faith.

“ 13. The right and true Christian faith, is not only to believe, that Holy Scripture, and the Articles of our faith, are true: but also to have a sure trust and confidence to be saved from everlasting damnation by Christ; whereof doth follow a loving heart to obey his commandments.

“ 14. And this true Christian faith, neither any devil hath, nor yet any man, who in outward profession, in his receiving the sacraments, in going to Church, and in all outward appearances, seemeth to be a Christian, and yet in his life sheweth the contrary. For how can a man have this ‘ true faith, sure trust and confidence in God, that by the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven; and be reconciled to the favour of God,’ when he denieth Christ in his works? Surely no ungodly man can have this faith and trust in God.

“ 15. If we do truly believe, that whereas we were condemned to hell and death everlasting, God hath given his own Son to take our nature upon him, and to suffer death for our offences, to justify us, and to restore us to life everlasting: if we truly believe that he hath made us his children, brethren unto his only Son, and inheritors with him of his eternal kingdom of heaven; these great and merciful benefits of God, will move us to render ourselves unto God wholly, with all our hearts, might, and power, to serve him in all good works, to seek in all things his glory: evermore dreading to offend in word, thought, or deed, such a merciful God and loving Redeemer. They will also move us, to be ever ready for his sake to give ourselves to our neighbours, and as much as lieth in us, to study, with all our endeavour, to do good to every man.—These are the fruits of our faith, to do good, as much as lieth in us, to every man: and above all things, and in all things, to advance the glory of God: to whom be praise, and honour, world without end."

"8. From the whole tenor then of her Liturgy, Articles, and Homilies, the Doctrine of the Church of England, appears to be this:

"1. That good works, properly so called, can neither merit nor precede justification:

"2. That true sanctification cannot be previous to it.

"3. That as the *meritorious cause* of justification is, the life and death of Christ: so the condition of it is faith. Faith alone; and,

"4. That both inward and outward holiness are consequent on this faith, and are the ordinary, stated condition of final justification.

"9. And what more can those desire, who have hitherto opposed justification by faith alone, merely upon a principle of conscience; because they were zealous for holiness and good works? Do not we effectually secure these from contempt, at the same time that we defend the doctrines of the Church? We not only allow, but vehemently contend, that none shall ever enter into glory, who is not holy on earth, as well in heart, as in all manner of conversation. We cry aloud, ‘Let all that have believed, be careful to maintain good works:’ and, ‘Let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from all iniquity.’ We exhort even those who are conscious they do not believe, ‘Cease to do evil, learn to do well: the kingdom of heaven is at hand; therefore, repent, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance.’ Are not these directions the very same in substance, which any true Christian would give to persons so circumstanced? What means then the endless *strife of words?* Or, *whom doth their arguing reprove?*

“10. Many of those, nevertheless, who are zealous of good works, think we have allowed too much. Nay, brethren, but how can we help allowing it, if we allow the Scriptures to be from God? For is it not written, and do not yourselves believe, ‘Without holiness no man shall see the Lord?’ And how then, without fighting about words, can we deny, that holiness is a condition of final acceptance? And, as to the first acceptance or pardon, does not all experience as well as Scripture prove, that no man ever yet truly believed the gospel, who did not first repent? That none was ever yet truly convinced of righteousness, who was not first convinced of sin? Repentance, therefore, in this sense, we cannot deny to be necessarily previous to justifying faith. Is it not equally undeniable, that the running back into known, wilful sin, (suppose it were drunkenness,) stifles that repentance or conviction? And can that repentance come to any good issue in his soul, who resolves not to forgive his brother? or, who obstinately refrains from what God convinces him is right, whether it be prayer or hearing his word? Would you scruple yourself to tell one of these, 'Why, if you will thus drink away all conviction, how should you ever truly know your want of Christ? or, consequently, believe in him?—If you will not forgive your brother his trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses.—If you will not ask, how can you expect to receive?—If you will not hear, how can faith come by hearing? It is plain you grieve the Spirit of God; you will not have him to reign over you. 'For unto him that hath, shall be given; but from him that hath not,' i. e. uses it not, 'shall be taken away even that which he hath.' Would you scruple on a proper occasion to say this? You could not scruple it, if you believe the Bible. But, in saying this, you allow all that we have said, viz. 'That previous to justifying faith, there must be repentance, and if opportunity permit, fruits meet for repentance.'"

Those who consider the above short account of Mr. Wesley's doctrine, will easily see how little reason there was for the objection, which, he tells us, (p. 29, of the same book,) was then made against him, and his helpers, viz. "That they made it their principal employ, wherever they went, to instill into people a few *favourite tenets* of their own; and this with such diligence and zeal as if the whole of christianity depended upon them, and all efforts toward the true christian life, without a belief of those tenets, were vain and ineffectual."

"I plead guilty," says Mr. Wesley, "to this charge. I do make it my principal, nay, my whole employ, and that wherever I go, to instill into the people, a few favourite tenets. (Only be it observed, they are not my own, but his that sent me.) And it is undoubtedly true, that this I do, (though deeply conscious of my want, both of zeal and diligence,) as if the whole of christianity depended upon them, and all efforts without them were void and vain.

"I frequently sum them all up in one. In Christ Jesus, (i. e. according to his gospel,) 'neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love.' But many times I instill them one by one, under these or the like expressions. 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;' as thy own soul: as Christ loved us. 'God is love: and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.' 'Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.' 'While we have time let us do good unto all men; especially unto them that are of the household of faith.' 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them.'

"These are my favourite tenets, and have been for many years. O that I could instill them into every soul throughout the land! Ought they not to be instilled with such diligence and zeal, as if the whole of christianity depended upon them? For, who can deny, that all efforts toward a christian life, without more than a bare belief, without a thorough experience and practice of these, are utterly vain and ineffectual ?"

Such is the account which Mr. Wesley gives of the doctrine he taught, and it appears evident, that it is precisely that of the Church of England, on all the important points above mentioned. And no person, I think, at least that professes to be a member of that Church, will take upon him to say it is either unscriptural or irrational. We have seen, " in what a cautious manner," says Dr. Whitehead, in the sermon before named, " he made up his mind on these doctrines, examining the Scriptures continually, never adopting any opinion without evidence from Scripture and Reason. So far was he from following an heated imagination, or taking up opinions as an enthusiast, that he maintained we ought to use our understanding, compare one thing with another, and draw just conclusions from such comparisons, as well in matters of religion as in other things. 'There are many,' says he, 'that utterly decry the use of reason in religion, nay, that condemn all reasoning concerning the things of God, as utterly destructive of true religion: but we can in no wise agree with this. We find no authority for it in holy writ. So far from it, that we find there, both our Lord and his Apostles, reasoning continually with their opposers. Neither do we know, in all the productions of ancient and modern times, such a chain of reasoning and argumentation, so close, so solid, so regularly connected, as the epistle to the Hebrews. And the strongest reasoner whom we have ever observed (excepting only Jesus of Nazareth,) was that Paul of Tarsus; the same who has left that plain direction for all Christians, ‘ In malice or wickedness, be ye children; but in understanding, or reason, be ye men.’

“ It is evident, from these words, that Mr. Wesley deemed it necessary to use his reason in searching into the things of God. He read the Scriptures, and used his understanding in the best manner he could, to comprehend their meaning. He formed his religious principles in this way; he examined every step he took, and admitted no doctrine, nor any interpretation of Scripture, but what appeared to him to be agreeable to reason.

“ The outcry then, which has been raised against him, and the whole body with whom he was connected, as enthusiasts and fanaticks, is wholly unfounded; it only proceeds from the workings of a prejudiced mind, and a want of attention to the things spoken.

“ 1. The Gospel, considered as a general plan of salvation, he viewed as a display of the divine perfections, in a way agreeable to the nature of God; in which all the divine attributes harmonize, and shine forth with peculiar lustre. Divine love in the gift of a Redeemer: divine wisdom, conspicuous in the plan of redemption: divine justice, tempered with mercy to man, in the death of the Saviour: divine energy and power in making the whole effectual to raise a fallen creature from a state of sin and misery, to a state of holiness and happiness, and from a state of death, to immortal life and glory.

“ 2. The Gospel, considered as a means to attain an end, appeared to him to discover as great fitness in the means to the end, as can possibly be discovered in the structure of natural bodies, or in the various operations of nature, from a view of which we draw our arguments for the existence of God. This certainly was not an irrational view of the Gospel; but shewed a mind enlarged, capacious, capable of comprehending great things, of investigating every part of the Gospel, and of harmonizing the whole.

"3. Man, he viewed as blind, ignorant, wandering out of the way; with his mind estranged from God. The Gospel, considered only as a system of moral truths, he judged to be adapted to enlighten the understanding, and direct the judgment. But, experience and observation convinced him, as well as the Scripture, that a man may contemplate moral truths, and learn to discourse well of them, without acquiring a practical, moral principle, of sufficient strength to reform his conduct. It is conscience, he knew, that judges of the right or wrong of a man's motives and actions; that till conscience interpose its authority, and pass sentence on him, the man remains insensible of his own state and condition, however well he may discourse on morality in general. He is, in the language of Scripture, dead in trespasses and sins. The Gospel then, being the power of God to salvation, he was persuaded, must be more than a mere system of morals. It promises, and God actually gives, the Spirit of Promise, which convinces the world of sin. The Spirit of God accompanies the word of the Gospel, and the other means of grace, and makes them effectual to awaken conscience to the exercise of its office, to pass the sentence of condemnation for what has been done wrong; and the speculative truths of the understanding being thus combined with the dictates of conscience, a practical principle is formed of sufficient strength to restrain the passions and reform the conduct. This he used to call repentance, and often conviction for sin. And was he irrational in this? Is not this blessing of the gospel agreeable to the state, and to the natural faculties of man?

"4. He considered the gospel as a dispensation of mercy to men, holding forth pardon, a free pardon of sin to all who repent and believe in Christ Jesus. That this is a scriptural doctrine, no man can doubt, who reads the New Testament: it is interwoven with every part of Scripture. It will bear the test of reason also. It is suited to the state and wants of men, as they stand related to a holy God. It is suited to the wants of every man living: every man has sinned, and come short of the glory of God; every man therefore stands in need of mercy. It was not then irrational in Mr. Wesley, to hold forth the rich display of divine grace in Christ Jesus to penitent sinners, in the free manner that he did. His doctrine is founded on a general view of the Scriptures; on the peculiar promises of the gospel: and it is suited to the present condition and wants of men, as they stand related to God, and the prospects of another world.

"5. The gospel enjoins universal holiness both in heart, and in the conduct of life. The design of it is, to regulate our affections, and govern our actions. It requires us to be dead to the world, and alive to God: to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves: to do unto others as we would they should do unto us. And God has promised, in the gospel, the continual aid and assistance of his Holy Spirit, to strengthen us with all might in the inner man: Christ is a Saviour that is able to save to the uttermost all them that come unto God by him; and there is a throne of grace, at which we may obtain, not only mercy, but grace to help in time of need. To him who rightly believes the gospel, it is a means adequate to the end intended by it; to him it is a quickening spirit, a purifying and cleansing word, the power of God to his salvation: it influences every action of his mind, and regulates every action of his life: to his mind it exhibits such views of paternal love, in every part of the plan of redemption, and of a superintending Providence, directing all things with unerring wisdom, to promote his holiness here, and his happiness and glory hereafter, that he is continually animated to the practice of every Christian virtue, and strengthened with patience to run the race that is set before him.

" The gospel then, considered as a large, comprehensive plan of redemption, holds forth blessings, suited to our present state and necessities: wisdom to instruct us, mercy to justify or pardon, and grace to sanctify and cleanse us from evil; with promises of protection and help through the snares and difficulties of life. It operates upon us in a way that is suited to our faculties: it enlightens the understanding, awakens the conscience, subdues the will, and regulates the affections. Nor are its benefits confined to the present life; they extend to the regions of the dead, and expand our views to the prospects of eternity. What a glorious view does the gospel hold forth to us of a resurrection from the dead! Our Lord hath died, and risen again, that he might be Lord, both of the dead, and of the living. They that die in the Lord, are still under his protection and guidance. Death cannot separate any from the love of Christ. The gospel, therefore, in this view, holds forth blessings suited to our necessities, as comprehensive as our wants, and adapted to our state in life and death, and the enjoyments of a glorious and happy eternity. These views Mr. Wesley continually held forth, and that with such energy and force, as made a lasting impression on the minds of thousands.

" 6. But I must observe further, that in explaining the order in which the blessings of the gospel are promised to man, he shewed a mind well instructed in the Oracles of God, and well acquainted with human nature.

" There is not, perhaps, greater confusion in any part of the systems of religion, or in the common explanations given of the Gospel, than in this: I mean, in the order in which the blessings of the Gospel are promised to us, and in which we ought to expect them. We must say, that Mr. Wesley had an excellent introduction to this part of his ministerial office: he himself had entered in at the right door. When a Minister is awakened in his own heart, when he is truly sensible of his sin, and want of a Saviour, and comes to God for mercy as a poor sinner, and accepts it as the free gift of God through Jesus Christ: being sensible that he must be justified, (or pardoned,) by faith, without the deeds of the law; he is well prepared to instruct others; and to instruct them, not only in the right way, but also in the right order in which we ought to expect the benefits of the Gospel. How accurate was Mr. Wesley, in shewing that the first step to be a Christian is to repent; that till the conscience be awakened to a true sense of the evil of sin, a man cannot enter into a state of justification: it would totally subvert the design of the gospel, were it possible that an unawakened person could be justified. The very supposition frustrates every intention of the coming of the Son of God; which was to deliver us from sin, to reconcile us to God, and to prepare us for heaven. He carefully and properly distinguished these matters in his preaching and writings: he contended that the awakening of conscience is the first step in experimental religion; and that, till a man is convinced of the evil of sin, and is determined to depart from it; till he is convinced that there is a beauty in holiness, and something truly desirable in being reconciled to God; he is not prepared to receive Christ. It would be well if all the Ministers of the Gospel laid this true foundation of Christian experience; and did not confound the order in which the blessings of the Gospel are given to the soul. It has been a singular blessing to the body of the Methodists at large, that their Ministers have so accurately distinguished these things, and guarded them against error, in a matter that so nearly concerns their peace, and their progress in the divine life. They have, by these distinctions, been enabled to judge with more certainty of their state of mind, and to what degree of experience they have already attained in the things of God: they have been enabled to see more distinctly and clearly the benefits of the gospel which are still before them, and have been animated in the pursuit of them, by an assurance of success, if they persevere in the way which God has appointed.

"In marking so distinctly the order in which we experience the benefits of the Gospel, Mr. Wesley certainly followed the example of our Lord and the

Apostles. Our Lord began his preaching by saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,' Mat. iv. 17. Peter, preaching to the Jews at Jerusalem, says, 'Repent ye, and be converted,' Acts iii. 19. Paul has made this distinction in the most pointed manner: 'I kept back nothing,' says he, 'that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you, publickly, and from house to house: testifying, both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, Repentance toward God, and faith toward our-Lord Jesus Christ,' Acts xx. 20, 21. But he not only followed the Scripture in observing this order, but also reason, and the natural order of things. Does not the natural order of things require, that a man be first convinced of his faults, before he can be reclaimed from them? Must not a man be conscious of his condemnation, before he will apply to God for pardon? Our progress in Christian experience bears a striking analogy to our progress in any art or science. A man must first be instructed in the fundamental principles of an art or science, before he can proceed to the higher branches of it. The first step prepares him for the second, and so on through the whole of his progress. The same order is observable in Christian experience. The first step in it prepares the mind for the second; and so on till we come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. In this important article then, Mr. Wesley has spoken according to Scripture, and agreeably to the nature, and fitness of things.

"The second important and necessary step in Christian experience, is, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, arising chiefly from a Scriptural view of his priestly office. When the mind is duly prepared to receive Christ in this character, pardon is held forth to us in the Gospel as a free gift, without money, and without price; through Christ the atonement for our sins. How often did he set him forth as crucified, before men's eyes! He exhibited him to their view in his priestly character, as the atonement for the sins of the world. He often shewed that the atonement which he has made is complete; that the most vile, helpless sinner who repents, and turns from his sins, may come, and freely receive pardon as the gift of God, in and through Christ; and have free admittance to this throne of grace. How gloriously did he often explain this truth, and with what good effect, to multitudes of his hearers, who were blessed and strengthened under his word, while God bore witness to the truth of it, and sealed its evidence on their hearts.

"In explaining Sanctification, he accurately distinguished it from Justification, or the pardon of sin. Justification admits us into a state of grace and favour with God, into the family of heaven; into a state of fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, and lays the foundation of sanctification or Christian holiness, in all its extent. He shewed that the tendency, and end of our justification, is holiness of heart, and holiness in all manner of conversation: that being justified by faith, our relation to God is altered; our sins are forgiven; we are now become children of God, and heirs of all the promises of the Gospel, are quickened and animated with the spirit of it. In this stage of Christian experience, faith realizes the truths of the Gospel to the mind; it becomes a practical principle of sufficient strength, not only to restrain the passions, but to purify

rify the heart, to influence every faculty of the soul, and every action in the life, and to transform the man, as a moral agent, into the image of God. What a glorious view of the Gospel did he afford his hearers; and how often did he instruct them, that Christ, as the living Head of his church, and acting upon it, in and by the means of every part of the Gospel, is sufficient to accomplish the end of his coming; to change the heart, write his laws upon our minds, and make us like himself. He urged these views of the Gospel, again and again, and roused his congregations to an ardent pursuit of universal holiness and purity. It is true, there has been a great clamour raised against him on this subject, because he called his view of sanctification by the word 'Perfection:' many, even of the professors of religion, have thought him very absurd in this matter. I shall only observe upon this head, that, he often explained what he meant by that term; and, that he did not mean to differ with any one about a word, though it be Scriptural. He meant by the word 'Perfection,' such a degree of the love of God, and the love of man; such a degree of the love of justice, truth, holiness, and purity, as will remove from the heart every contrary disposition towards God or man: and that this should be our state of mind in every situation, and in every circumstance of life. Oh! what a Paradise would this earth be, were all Christians sanctified in this degree! Can there be a more amiable picture of the Gospel than this? Is it irrational, to tell us, that God sent his Son into the world to make us new creatures? To give us true views of God, and of ourselves: of his love, mercy, truth, and goodness: of his providential care, and his all-sufficiency to bless us with every blessing in heavenly things in Christ Jesus; to give us true views of life, death, and eternity, and hereby to arm us with divine strength to resist and overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil; and to give us those dispositions of mind which prepare us to worship, love, reverence, and serve God, and to be just, true, and helpful to one another in this wilderness, as a preparation for the enjoyment of God, and the society of heaven? And is this, I say, to talk irrationally? as one, who is doing an injury to the world? How rashly do men judge and speak, when their passions are inflamed! But candour must acknowledge, that in this he excelled, and that, though his doctrine be contrary to the lives of the professors of religion in general, it is agreeable to the Oracles of God, and to the nature and fitness of things.

" There is another point that I mean to consider, relative to his religious opinions, and a point likewise that has been strangely misunderstood, and a great outcry raised against it: not, indeed, by the bulk of religions people, but by men of abilities, and of learning, who make pretensions to reason and calm discussion. The article I mean is this; that all the blessings of the Gospel are to be obtained by faith. He has told us expressly, that we are saved by faith: he has told us also, what he means by salvation; the being put in possession of the blessings of the Gospel: the being justified by the grace of God through the redemption that is in Christ; the being sanctified, or made holy in heart, and holy in all manner of conversation; he has taught us, that all these things are to be obtained by faith. This has been thought a very irrational opinion: but I think it has been thought so, very rashly. That it is consonant with the Scriptures, is beyond a doubt: we can hardly open our Testament in any part, but we find this doctrine taught: we can hardly read a chapter in St. Paul's Epistles but we find it inculcated again and again. And I apprehend it will bear the test of reason also, and be found, upon the strictest inquiry, to be agreeable to our state and condition in this life. Is it unreasonable, for instance, that we should believe in God? That we should believe in him who made us, who upholds us, and who governs all things; in him, who conducts the whole machine of nature in all its vast extent, and in all its complicated operations; who comprehends every thing as it were in one grasp; in whom all things live, and move, and have their being? Is it unreasonable that a poor mortal, who knows not what is just coming upon him, not even what shall happen to him the next moment, should trust in God? That he should confide in the goodness and providence of him, who sees all things at one view, past, present, and to come; and who sees man at one glance, in every period of his existence, with every surrounding circumstance? Must not every reasonable man allow that this is agreeable to the nature of God, and the state of man?

"The Gospel promiseth to us a state of intercourse and fellowship with God, in the present enjoyment of spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus. Faith is made a necessary condition of entering into this state of intercourse and enjoyment. In this, God has dealt with us in a way suitable to our faculties, and our state of intercourse with one another. For we can have no kind of connection with each other, without faith: all must acknowledge that faith is the bond of human society. Can we transact any kind of business without it? It is evident that we cannot. We can have no enjoyment of the things of this life without an act of faith preceding it. All our expectations and future prospects in life are founded on faith. We find, upon examination, that in every branch of business, in every social intercourse, we must first believe, and act from faith, and then we obtain the thing we expected, provided our faith be rightly placed. We cannot engage a servant, without faith in him. A merchant cannot transact business with any one, without first having faith in the person with whom he transacts that business. When the husbandman ploughs his land, and sows his seed, faith is the principle from which he acts. Unless then we act from faith, we can have no fellowship with one another, nor enjoy the comforts of life. And we may further observe, that if the mind be sufficiently furnished with knowledge and prudence, our success will be in proportion to the degree of our faith, and the exertions that are made in consequence of it. This great man, then, shewed himself well acquainted both with Scripture, and human nature, in explaining this important article of Christian experience.

"It would be easy to shew at large, how faith operates on the mind in every step of Christian experience. In repentance, the first step towards the Christian life, a man must believe that there is a God, who is holy, just, and good: he must believe the Word of God; that there is a judgment to come, when every thought and action will be examined, and when the wicked will be condemned to punishment, and the righteous will inherit eternal life. He must believe also that God is merciful, and pardon may be obtained through Jesus Christ; for a view of the holiness of God, and of his own sinfulness, would, without this, produce despair, which is not gospel repentance. When, by the grace of God, these things are impressed upon the mind of a man, with full conviction of their truth, they awaken his conscience, and excite him to attention and self-examination, and gradually prepare him to receive Christ in his mediatorial character.

"With respect to pardon, when the mind is rightly prepared for it, the gospel has made faith the express condition of it. How ably did Mr. Wesley establish this truth, and defend it against all opposition! Pardon of sin is obtained for us by the blood of Christ, it is promised to us by the Word of God; but it must be received by faith; we must believe in the word of promise, in order to receive it. And he that believeth is justified: he is justified now, the moment he receives Christ as his Mediator, his Saviour, his Atonement. His faith is counted to him for righteousness; it gives him a title to the promise of pardon, and to the blessings connected with it.

"If we examine further how faith purifies the heart, we shall find that there is nothing irrational in the doctrine. There is nothing better adapted to remove every evil from the human heart than faith in Christ; there is nothing more efficacious, as a mean to preserve us from evil through life, than faith rightly explained and rightly exercised. Faith, as it unites us to Christ our living head, gives us a principle of divine life; we begin to live unto God, from a principle of love in the heart; to live a life that is given by him who is the resurrection and the life, and who raiseth the soul to an union with God. When this has taken place, old things are done away, all things are become new: the views, the purposes, and the affections of the man are changed: he no longer acts from the same motives, nor by the same rules as before; a new principle of action is formed in his heart, which directly leads to holiness and to God.

" Faith, as a practical principle, is called by St. Paul, ' the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.' It gives the things hoped for a present subsistence in the mind, in that degree which is suited to our present state. It is the evidence of things not seen: it realizes the truths of the Gospel to the mind, and enables it to view them with as much certainty as we have of the existence of corporeal objects, when we feel their influence over our senses. A man who acts under the influence of this faith, who has gospel truths full in his view, with all the certainty that his senses can give him of the existence of external objects, will undoubtedly find his heart powerfully affected by them. This faith will work by love, it will purify the heart from every thing contrary to the mind that was in Christ. It will enable him to acknowledge God in all his ways, to set him continually before his eyes, to live, as in his presence, with a view to his glory, and resigned to his will. Let us instance in one thing only at present. Suppose a man believe that there is a Providence which superintends human affairs: if he be assured that Divine Love can intend nothing but good in every thing that happens to him, and that Infinite Wisdom cannot err in adapting the means to the end intended: if he be as fully assured of these truths as he is of the existence of the things which he sees or hears; will not this faith lead him to a reverential fear of God, and a perfect resignation to his will in every occurrence of life? It appears to me certain, that it will, and also that it will make him cautious of his conduct, and attentive to every part of his duty. He will be anxiously careful for nothing, but living under a deep sense of the Divine Presence and Care, his mind will be kept in perfect peace, because it is stayed upon God. In this then, Mr. Wesley appears to have spoken agreeably to Scripture and Reason.

" 10. Let us now take notice of his notions of the universality of the Gospel blessings. Here he shone with peculiar lustre; here he did honour to God, and the Divine Attributes. He maintained that God is a God of love, not to a part of his creatures only, but to all; that He, who is the Father of all, who made all, who stands in the same relation to all his creatures; loves them all: that he loved the world, and gave his Son a ransom for all, without distinction of persons: that there is no respect of persons with God. This is an amiable character of the Deity. It always appeared to him, that to represent God as partial, as confining his love to a few, was unworthy of our notions of the Deity. He therefore represented the Gospel in the most glorious and extensive point of view. He maintained that Christ died for all men; that he is to be offered to all; that all are to be invited to come to him; and that whosoever comes, in the way which God has appointed, may partake of his blessings. He maintained, That sufficient grace is given to all, in that way and manner which is best adapted to influence the mind. And may we not appeal to every man's experience for the truth of this? How often did he appeal to the consciences of men?—Have not our hearts reproved us? Have we not at times trembled for our sins? Nay, have we not done more than this; have we not been ashamed of ourselves? Have we not detested our own conduct in secret, when none has seen us but God, and none has been privy to our actions but our own heart? Whence did this arise? Certainly not from man, but from God. It is an evidence that there is salvation for thee, O man, who art in this state; God is not willing that thou shouldest perish; he is calling thee, inviting thee, to turn from thy sins, and turn to God.—He thus stated the truths of the Gospel with convincing evidence to the candid mind, which is open to the conviction of truth. And herein he spoke according to the Scriptures. The expressions of Scripture are positive in favour of this doctrine: there are passages which so positively declare it, that it is impossible to give any other construction to them without the greatest violence: but there is not a single passage in the New Testament, which seems to favour the doctrine that Christ died for a part of mankind only, which will not easily admit of a different construction.

" It is true, he raised some enemies by this doctrine. He was called an Arminian; and perhaps many who have used the term have annexed an idea to it, by no means just. How often did he wish, and it is devoutly to be wished by all the friends of true religion, that the names of Calvinist and Arminian were buried in oblivion: they have only tended to keep up strife and discord, amongst those who ought to love one another as brethren, however they may have differed on some points of doctrine. But some have supposed, that to be an Arminian, is to maintain salvation by works: that it is to degrade Christ: to throw the lustre of redemption by Christ into a cloud at any rate, if not to overturn it. Was this the case with Mr. Wesley? Did he not preach free grace as much as any Calvinist? Did he not assert that pardon is the free gift of God, without money and without price? Did he not assert that repentance itself only prepares the heart to receive the gift of God? that it does not give any kind of merit to the man that experiences it? How often did he declare that the best works any man can perform need atonement! So far was he from putting works in the place of the blood of Christ, that he only gave them their just value; he placed them in the order of Christian experience, where the Gospel places them: where we ought all to place them; as the fruits of a living, operative faith, and as the measure of our future reward; for every man will be rewarded, not for his works, but according to the measure of them. This is undoubtedly a scriptural representation of this matter, and it would be well if all Christians were to attend to this distinction more than they do. It is to be feared that some may have cried out against works, not from the best motives, but from some inclination to relax in holiness. The way in which some have preached faith, has done no honour to the Gospel; and may probably have encouraged some persons to pay less attention to Christian duties than they ought to do. But we must say of him, that while he insisted on good works, as the necessary fruits of faith, he gave the whole glory of salvation to God from first to last; not only in the general plan of it, but in the order of communicating the benefits of Christ to the mind. He believed that man would never turn to God, if God did not begin the work: nay, how often did he say, that the first approaches of grace to the mind are irresistible; what I mean is, that a man cannot avoid being convinced that he is a sinner; that God by various means awakens his conscience; and, whether the man will or not, these convictions approach him. Here, it is plain, he gave all the glory of the work of salvation in the heart, to the grace of God, and ascribed no merit to works. He tells us, however, that in proportion as we improve the grace given, we shall have more, and be rewarded according to our works, with grace here, as well as glory hereafter.

"11. There is one subject more, which, though it be of the utmost importance in religion, [I must touch upon as briefly as possible. The subject which I mean is 'Christian Experience.' It is well known that this able Minister of the Gospel, together with his brother Charles, and the Rev. Mr. Whitefield, have been the principal instruments in the hands of God, of diffusing the knowledge of this important article of the Christian religion amongst the bulk of the people of this country. Considered in this view only, they have been a blessing to every class and order of men. For though all have not believed their report, yet many have believed it, in every station of life, and borne a happy testimony to the truth of it. How ably did he illustrate and defend this part of Christianity! Many, indeed, have supposed, that what we call Experience, is mere imagination: that it is nothing more than the working up of our minds into a fancy of something which can have no foundation in truth or reason. This has been the general opinion of what the Methodists call Experience; and hence has arisen the charge of enthusiasm. But certainly Christian Experience is something real, and not imaginary: certainly it rests upon as solid a foundation as the evidence of our external senses. We have no more reason to doubt the reality of our experience, when it is Scriptural, than we have to doubt of the existence of an object which we see with our eyes, or of a sound which we hear, when these organs are in the most sound and healthy state. But let us inquire what Christian Experience is, and what degree of certainty there is in it.

" Christian Experience is the present possession of the benefits of the Gospel which relate to this life, and which prepare us for the enjoyment of God in glory. If we use the word in the most extensive sense, so as to include the preparation of the mind to receive Christ in his mediatorial character, it will imply repentance towards God, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and the fruits of the Spirit, so admirably described by St. Paul: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, fidelity, meekness, and temperance, Gal. v. 22, 23; with all the privileges of the Christian state here. In the Gospel we are commanded to repent, and turn to God; to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and to be filled with the fruits of the Spirit. The Gospel promises every necessary aid and assistance to put us in possession of these benefits; and we read also in the New Testament, of many persons who professed to have experience of these things. If, indeed, the Gospel be a fable, then the things it speaks of, and the promises it makes, signify nothing real, they are purely imaginary, and to profess any experience of them must be delusion. But, as we have the most certain evidence that the Gospel is of God; that it gives a true account of what God has done, and is now doing, for the salvation of men, and of the means by which he is accomplishing this great purpose, the promises it gives us must signify something real, and they must be as certain as the existence and truth of God himself. It is certain then, that we may experience the blessings it promises to us, if we seek them in the way which God has appointed.

" If we inquire into the evidence which a man has that he does experience the things we here speak of, we shall find that it is of the strongest kind possible. If a man's understanding be enlightened with Gospel truths; if his conscience be awakened to decide justly on his motives and actions, as they relate to God and his law; if, in consequence of this, he turn from his sins, and is humbled, abased, and ashamed before God for them, and prays for mercy: how is it possible for such a change as this is, to take place in the dictates of his conscience, and in the opinion he has had of himself, and he not know it? The very supposition is absurd; he must be as conscious of it, as he is of his own existence, or of any thing that happens to him. In like manner, when a person in the state I have now described, is enabled to believe in Jesus Christ to the saving of his soul; to rely fully on him for pardon and acceptance with God: must not such a person be conscious of this act of his mind, and the change in his views of God, and in the feelings of his mind that are subsequent to it? Will he not be as conscious and certain of these things, as he is of an object which he sees before him, or of the pleasure or pain he feels? If he that believeth be filled with love, joy, peace, and the other fruits of the Spirit just mentioned, must he not be certain of this: Our internal consciousnes carries the same conviction of reality with it, as our external senses. Would it not appear exceedingly absurd to you, if you heard a person say, in the common affairs of life, that he loved an object dearly, but that he was not conscious of any love? That he rejoiced exceedingly in a thing, but he did not feel any joy? It is just the same in Christian experience. If from proper views of the Gospel, and faith in Christ, I feel peace, I cannot be ignorant of it; if I look up to God through Jesus Christ with holy confidence, and feel pleasure and delight, I must be conscious and certain of it.

" Christian Experience, then, as the Rev. Mr. Wesley long explained it, has certainty in it: if a man has it, he cannot be ignorant of it. But I must say, that those who have it not, cannot form a just conception of it. How is it possible for any man who has not felt the peace of God, to form a just notion of it? Its evidence stands on the same ground as the evidence of our external senses. For if a man had never seen colours, he could not form any true idea of them: if a man had never felt pain or pleasure, he could not be taught to understand what they are, however perfect his rational faculties might be; he must feel them to know them. So it is with Chrissian experience; you must enter into it, and feel it, and then you will know what it is; and as easily distinguish it from the feelings or consciousness arising from other things, as you distinguish seeing from hearing, or the touch from smell."

SECTION XI.

OF THE STEPS TAKEN TO IMPROVE THE PREACHERS IN KNOWLEDGE:—OF THEIR USEFULNESS, AND THE FURTHER SPREAD OF RELIGION.

MR. WESLEY's great love of exactness and order was abundantly gratified by the establishment of the discipline above described:—the formation of *Circuits*, and the introduction of *Conferences*. In every place, where he, or the Preachers in connection with him laboured, the same rules were observed in forming and governing the Societies. From this time, therefore, the work of reformation went forward with regularity and sameness, so that it will not be necessary to proceed further in the regular history of its progress. It will be sufficient to observe a few particulars respecting it, which appear most worthy of notice.

Although Mr. Wesley had now got many Assistants, yet he continued his own labours with the same zeal and diligence, through the most distant parts of the kingdom. The Preachers also were *instant in season, and out of season.* Methodism, therefore, spread rapidly on every side: the Societies flourished, and the people increased in number, and in the knowledge and love of the truth. It is true, the Lay-Preachers at this period, were not, in general, of that class of men that have been favoured with opportunities of improving their minds by an early education, or much reading. The knowledge of many of them extended not beyond the first principles of Religion, and the practical consequences, deducible from them; *Repentance toward God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ,* and the fruits that follow, *righteousness*, and *peace*, and *joy in the Holy Ghost.* These were the subjects of their daily discourses, in which there was little variety. But such was the low state of religious knowledge among the people, that they were not then prepared for any thing higher. It was absolutely necessary to make them well acquainted with *first principles*, and to give these principles a practical influence on the heart and life, before they were led any further. In these circumstances, the limited knowledge of the Preachers was so far from being an inconvenience, that it was an unspeakable advantage; as it necessarily confined them to those fundamental points of experimental and practical religion, which were best adapted to the state of the people.

Preachers of education and diversified knowledge, seldom dwell sufficiently, in their sermons, on these important points; and hence the Lay-Preachers were far more successful in awakening sinners to a sense of their dangerous state, and in bringing them to a saving knowledge of *Christ*, than other Preachers of much more cultivated minds. To enforce the necessity of repentance, and of seeking salvation by grace alone through a Redeemer, the Preacher would often draw a picture of human nature in such strong and natural colours, that every one who heard him saw his own likeness in it, and was ready to say, "he hath shewed me all that was in my heart."

The effect was surprising. The people found themselves, under every discourse, emerging out of the thickest darkness into a region of light. The blaze being suddenly poured in upon them, gave exquisite pain at first; but soon shewed them the way to peace and consolation.

Mr. Wesley foresaw, however, that as knowledge was increased among the people, it ought to be increased in the same, or even in a greater proportion, among the Preachers, otherwise they would become less useful, and in the end be despised. He therefore began to think of a collection of such books in the English language, as might forward their improvement, in treating on the various branches of practical divinity, and might also instruct and edify the people. And being conscious, perhaps, that the plan of his own education, and the prejudices he had early imbibed against the non-conformists of the last century, had shut him out from the knowledge of many writings, which possibly might be very useful on this occasion, he applied to Dr. Doddridge, with whom he had a friendly correspondence, for a list of such books as he might think proper for the improvement of young Preachers. After some delay, arising from the Doctor's want of leisure, he received such a list, and soon after formed the design of publishing his Christian Library. To form this, he selected and abridged the works of the wisest, and most pious men that have lived since the days of the Apostles. He began with the Epistles, and other writings of the Apostolic Fathers, Ignatius, Polycarp, Clemens Romanus, &c. He waded through a prodigious number of books on practical and experimental religion, in regular succession, according to the times when they were written: and at length completed a work of fifty volumes. When we consider that he reduced many folios and quartos to a pocket volume: that he did this in the midst of labour, which many would think in itself sufficient to wear out the most robust of mankind: that he abridged some of those volumes on horseback, and others at inns, or houses, where he stayed but a few days or hours, how astonishing will his industry and perseverance appear!

To give his Preachers and people an idea of the wisdom and goodness of God, manifested in the visible creation, he compiled a System of Natural Philosophy. In this he comprised what is known with any certainty, or is likely to profit those who have pleasure in the works of God: who consider,

"These, as they change, Almighty Father! these
Are but the varied God!"

And his labour was not lost. Even the learned have admired this performance, as an useful and edifying compendium. Mr. Wesley received letters highly expressive of satisfaction, from some of the first names in Oxford, to whom he had presented it.

From the same motive he compiled his historical works. He had not time to be original in these productions. He therefore chose the best he could find, Civil and Ecclesiastical; and abridged, added, or altered, as he believed the truth required, and to suit the convenience of the purchaser; his *chief* aim being to spread religious and useful knowledge among the poor or middling class of men.

To unbend the mind, and innocently amuse it, he recommended the most excellent Poems, and some other writings in the English language: and published a collection of the former in three volumes. With the same design he abridged that much esteemed production, The Fool of Quality, by the late Mr. Brooke. He much admired this work, considered in the view mentioned above; as tending not only to entertain, but also to soften and amend the heart, and open every avenue to pity and benevolence.

His controversial pieces he wrote as need required. First, to *preserve* those who were in danger of being seduced from the plain religion of the Bible: and, secondly, if possible, to *recover* those who had fallen into the snare. The chief of these is his Treatise on Original Sin, in answer to the late Dr. Taylor of Norwich, the most subtle, refined, plausible Socinian of the present age: and whose writings gained the more credit, as he was a man of sobriety and benevolence. The Doctor never could be prevailed on to answer Mr. Wesley, as he had done his other opponents. Whether he was convinced or not, it is certain his esteem was gained; and he ever spoke of Mr. Wesley in terms of the highest respect.

Many of those who wrote against Mr. Wesley were far from being respectable: and some of them were destitute, either of ability or information. Some of his friends have regretted, that he would condescend to bestow an answer upon them. But though these writers knew neither the man they vilified, nor the subject they treated, yet they generally made a fierce attack, however clumsy, on some part of what he esteemed the truth of God. To this they were indebted for an answer. And many who never saw the publications of these gentlemen, have been edified by his replies; the truth appearing to them in a still stronger light than ever before.

It was in those pieces that his consummate skill in argument appeared with such advantage. He needed not to complain concerning any of his opponents,

> "*Quo teneam vultum mutantem Protea nodo?*"*

He could bind the subtlest of them. He perceived in a moment when they departed from the question, shifted the terms, or used any fallacy. And as he was attacked from every quarter, there is scarce any point of divinity, which he has not illustrated and confirmed in those occasional publications.

But his principal desire was, that his Preachers and people should study the Holy Scriptures, and accordingly, with a view to assist them therein, he had long purposed to write short Notes on the New Testament. But, through his great and incessant labours in travelling, preaching, superintending the Societies, and writing letters to his numerous correspondents, he could never find time to begin this necessary work, till the year 1753; when he was attacked with a consumptive disorder, which brought him to the gates of death. After struggling some time against it, he retired to Lewisham, near London, for the benefit of air and gentle exercise. From hence he removed to the Hot-Wells, where it pleased God, in answer to the prayers of thousands, to renew his strength, and to enable him again to declare his truth. This he did, at first, to a few persons at his apartments in the evening; the Lord thus preparing him for his usual labours, to which he soon returned.

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* How shall I hold one who is continually changing his shape?

He was confined, however, upon the whole, about four months, and employed a part of this time in writing the above-mentioned Notes. "I now," says he, "can neither travel nor preach; but blessed be God, I can still read, write, and think: O! that it may be to his glory."

As he avows in his Preface, that he took Bengelius for his model, in writing these Notes, we cannot be surprised that most of them are concisely explanatory. Those who have read the Gnomon of Bengelius, and especially his Preface to the Latin edition, need not be informed, with what a degree of abhorrence that learned man speaks of long comments, as tending to draw off the reader's attention from the Scripture itself; or as leading him to magnify some parts of it, to the neglect or lightly esteeming of other parts, equally given by the Divine Author for our profit. How exactly did these two great men agree in sentiment!

Some time after the publication of his New Testament, he was strongly solicited to write a Comment on the Old Testament also. But his various labours rendered this impossible. He at length so far complied with importunity, as to select and abridge the Comments of those writers who are most highly esteemed, particularly Henry and Poole; leaving out what he thought needless, or inconsistent with truth, and adding what he conceived necessary to perfect the sense, or make it conduce more directly to the spiritual profit of the reader. Those who can relish the Holy Scriptures in their own naked majesty, have used this help with thankfulness.

His Sermons have already been mentioned. Of his design in writing them, as well as of his method of investigating truth in general, he has given us the following striking account in his Preface.

"I design plain truth for plain people. Therefore of set purpose, I abstain from all nice and philosophical speculations, from all perplexed and intricate reasonings; and, as far as possible, from even the shew of learning, unless in sometimes citing the original Scripture. Nothing appears here in an elaborate, elegant, or rhetorical dress. I mention this, that curious readers may spare themselves the labour of seeking for what they will not find.

"My design is, in some sense, to forget all that I have ever read in my life. I mean to speak, in the general, as if I had never read one author, ancient or modern, (always excepting the inspired.) I am persuaded, that, on the one hand, this may be a means of enabling me more clearly to express the sentiments of my heart, while I simply follow the chain of my own thoughts, without entangling myself with those of other men: and that, on the other, I shall come with fewer weights upon my mind, with less of prejudice and prepossession, either to search for myself, or to deliver to others, the naked truths of the gospel.

"To candid, reasonable men, I am not afraid to lay open what have been the inmost thoughts of my heart. I have thought, I am a creature of a day, passing through life, as an arrow through the air. I am a spirit come from God, and returning to God: just hovering over the great gulf; till a few moments hence, I am no more seen; I drop into an unchangeable eternity! I want to know one thing, the way to heaven: How to land safe on that happy shore. God himself has condescended to teach the way; for this very end he came from heaven. He hath written it down in a book. O give me that book! At any price, give me the book of God! I have it: Here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be *Homo unius libri.** Here then I am, far from the busy ways of men. I sit down alone: Only God is here. In his presence, I open, I read his book: for this end, to find the way to heaven. Is there a doubt concerning the meaning of what I read? Does any thing appear dark or intricate? I lift up my heart to the Father of Lights. 'Lord, is it not thy word, *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God?* Thou *givest liberally, and upbraidest not.* Thou hast said, *If any be willing to do thy will, he shall know.* I am willing to do: Let me know thy will.' I then search after and consider parallel passages of Scripture, *comparing spiritual things with spiritual.* I meditate thereon, with all the attention and earnestness of which my mind is capable. If any doubt still remains, I consult those who are experienced in the things of God: and then the writings whereby, being dead, they yet speak. And what I thus learn, that I teach."

After such an account as this, to consider his sermons according to the usual mode of criticism, would be unfair. They fully answer the expectation, which the pious and sensible reader is led to form by this exordium. His first four volumes in particular give us a view of (what St. Paul calls την αναλογιαν της πιςεως) *The analogy of Faith.* They are written with great energy; and, as much as possible, in the very words of the inspired writers. He was fully of

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* A man of one book.

Luther's mind, who declared, that divinity was nothing else, than a grammar of the language of the Holy Ghost.

His other sermons were written occasionally. The last four volumes, (which he wrote for his Magazine,) have been much admired, even by those who were not much disposed to relish his doctrines in general. They certainly contain abundance of information; and are written not only with his usual strength, but with more than usual elegance.

His Appeals have been repeatedly mentioned.—Apologies they would have been called in the ancient church, and are indeed *masterly productions*. They were written in the fulness of his heart; while beholding *the world lying in the wicked one*, *he wept over it.* One may almost venture to assert, that no unprejudiced person can read them, without feeling their force and acknowledging their justness. It is certain they have convinced many persons who were deeply prejudiced; and those too of considerable learning. It has been remarked, that those who *truly* preach the Gospel, do it with a *flaming tongue*. I may make a similar remark respecting these Appeals. The flame, the power, and yet the sobriety of love, are highly manifest in them. I cannot but earnestly recommend them to all, who desire to know *what spirit he was of*, while contending against almost the whole world; and whether it really was for the truth of God he so contended.

About fourteen years before his death, he began to publish a periodical work, which he called the Arminian Magazine, as he designed to insert therein extracts and original treatises on Universal Redemption. Many of these are of great value; and were written by men of great erudition. In this work he reprinted an Original Tract of his own, entitled, 'Predestination Calmly considered.' Concerning this piece, a writer of Mr. Wesley's Life, who cannot be suspected of partiality, has observed, 'It is a model of controversy; clear and cogent; concise and argumentative; and the more convincing, because the spirit in which it is written is as amiable, as the reasoning is unanswerable. Perhaps there is not in the English language, a treatise which contains in so small a compass, so full and masterly a refutation of the principle he opposes.'

This publication has, upon the whole, been very profitable to its numerous readers. It is a Christian Library in itself, containing controversial, doctrinal, and experimental divinity, in prose and verse, animated by accounts of the triumphant deaths of many holy persons: natural philosophy, and remarkable anecdotes from history and travels, have also a place therein. In compilations of this nature, it could hardly be expected that nothing trifling should ever appear. Some things of this kind have been acknowledged: and it is hoped more abundant care will be taken, that this publication shall not again be thus lessened in its real value.

What has been said of Mr. Wesley's *design* in writing, may also be said of his *style*. His conciseness, which has been often remarked, did not arise from his abhorring circumlocution, as a *writer* only, but also as a *christian*. He has often said, that he made a conscience of using no more words on any subject than were strictly necessary. Perhaps sometimes on this account, he might complain with Horace,

—— brevis esse laboro,
Obscurus fio.

Striving to be concise, I become obscure. But this was rarely the case. His perspicuity is as remarkable as the manliness of his style.

His original works have great force and energy. This probably arose, in a good degree, from a circumstance not generally known. He never set himself to consider a subject, before the necessity of his treating upon it first appeared. Even then, he never wrote a line, till his mind was fully impressed with the nature and importance of it. He has said on one of those occasions, as Job, "Now if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost!" And he might have often said the same. His ideas came thus warm, both from the head and the heart. His soul was in the subject; and hence, the indelible impressions often made upon the minds of the readers.

"On the 24th of June, 1748, he opened his large school at Kingswood. He had long before built a small one for the children of the colliers, which still exists. The last was intended for the children of our principal friends, that they might receive a complete education in the languages and sciences, without endangering their morals in the great schools, where vice is so prevalent. In time, many of the Preachers married and had families. Their little pittance was not sufficient to enable them to support their children at school. The uninterrupted duties of the itinerant life would not permit the father to give his son the necessary education he required; and it is well known how impossible it is, in the general,

neral, for a mother to instruct, or even to govern, a son after a given age, especially during the absence of the father. On these considerations, after a few years, the school was appropriated to the education of the Preachers' sons. These are instructed, boarded, and clothed: and the charity is supported by an annual collection made in all the chapels belonging to the Societies in these kingdoms. The collection is now so increased, that a few small sums out of it are allowed toward the education of Preachers' daughters. Mr. Wesley drew up a set of rules for this school, which have been highly admired by most that have seen them.

SECTION XII.

OF THE REASON WHY LAY-PREACHERS WERE EMPLOYED AS ITINERANTS, AND THEIR STATIONS FREQUENTLY CHANGED: AND OF MR. WESLEY'S ENDEAVOURS TO ESTABLISH A UNION AND CO-OPERATION WITH THE PIOUS CLERGY OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH.

THE doctrines of the Bible, of the Reformation, and of the Church of England, were now preached in almost every part of the land. Present salvation by grace, through faith, and universal obedience, as the fruit thereof, urged on the consciences of men, caused *practical Christianity* again to revive. And, to use the words of that pious and elegant writer, the late Rev. Mr. Fletcher, Vicar of Madeley, Shropshire, Author of the 'Checks to Antinomianism,' "Leaning on her fair daughters, Truth and Love, Religion took a solemn walk through the kingdom, and gave a foretaste of heaven to all that entertained her." Many thousands, who had before been careless or profane, were now brought under a great concern for religion. And the deep impression made on their minds of the importance of eternal things, their being thoroughly convinced of the number and heinousness of their sins, and, in consequence thereof, bringing forth fruits meet for repentance: their being made happy partakers of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, and their walking in all holiness, were demonstrable proofs that the work was of God.

Now, although the Rev. Messrs. Wesleys and Whitefield were the first and principal instruments in spreading these important doctrines, and in beginning and carrying on this reformation; yet it appears, by the following letter of Mr. Wesley to the Rev. Mr. Walker of Truro, that he considered the Lay-Preachers that laboured in connection with him, as having a considerable share in promoting this blessed work. I the rather insert this letter, because it lays before us his thoughts on this subject, after almost twenty years trial of these Preachers.

"Rev. and dear Sir,

"I have one point in view, To promote, as far as I am able, vital, practical religion; and by the grace of God, to beget, preserve, and increase, the life of God in the souls of men. On this single principle I have hitherto proceeded, and taken no step, but in subserviency to it. With this view, when I found it to be absolutely necessary for the continuance of the work, which God had begun in many souls, I permitted several of their brethren, whom I believe God had called thereto, and qualified for the work, to comfort, exhort, and instruct those who were athirst for God, or who walked in the light of his countenance. But, as the persons so qualified were few, and those who wanted their assistance very many, it followed, that most of those were obliged to travel continually from place to place, and this occasioned several regulations from time to time, which were chiefly made in our Conferences.

" So great a blessing has, from the beginning, attended the labours of these Itinerants, that we have been more and more convinced every year, of the more than lawfulness of this proceeding. And the inconveniences, most of which we foresaw from the very first, have been both fewer and smaller than were expected. Rarely two in one year, out of the whole number of Preachers, have either separated themselves, or been rejected by us. A great majority have all along behaved as becometh the Gospel of Christ, and, I am clearly persuaded, still desire nothing more than to spend, and be spent for their brethren.

" But you advise, 'That as many of our Preachers as are fit for it, be ordained; and that the others be fixed to certain Societies, not as Preachers, but as Readers or Inspectors.'

" You oblige me by speaking your sentiments so plainly: with the same plainness I will answer. So far as I know myself, I have no more concern for the reputation of Methodism, or my own, than for the reputation of Prester John. I have the same point in view, as when I set out, The promoting, as I am able, vital, practical religion: and, in all our discipline, I still aim at the continuance of the work which God has already begun in so many souls. With this view, and this only, I permitted those whom I believed God had called thereto, to comfort, exhort, and instruct their brethren. And if this end can be better answered some other way, I shall subscribe to it without delay.

"But, is that which you propose, a better way? This should be cooly and calmly considered.

"If I mistake not, there are now (in 1756) in the county of Cornwall, about four and thirty little Societies, part of whom now experience the love of God; part are more or less earnestly seeking it. Four Preachers, Peter Jaco, Thomas Johnson, William Crabb, and William Alwood, design for the ensuing year, partly to call other sinners to repentance, but chiefly to feed, and guide these few feeble sheep: to forward them, as of the ability which God giveth, in vital, practical religion.

"Now suppose we can effect, That Peter Jaco, and Thomas Johnson, be ordained and settled in the Curacies of Buryan, and St. Just: and suppose William Crabb, and William Alwood, fix at Launceston, and Plymouth-Dock, as Readers and Exhorters: will this answer the end which I have in view, so well as travelling through the country?

"It will not answer it so well, even with regard to those societies, among whom Peter Jaco and Thomas Johnson are settled. Be their talents ever so great, they will, probably, ere long, grow dead themselves, and so will most of those that hear them. I cannot believe, it was ever the will of our Lord, that any congregation should have only one teacher. We have found by long and constant experience, that a frequent change of teachers is best. This Preacher has one talent, that another. No one, whom I ever yet knew, has all the talents which are needful for beginning, continuing, and perfecting the work of grace in a whole congregation.

" But suppose this would better answer the end, with regard to those two Societies, would it answer it in those where William Alwood, and William Crabb, were settled as Inspectors or Readers? First, Who shall feed them with the milk of the word? The Ministers of their parishes? But are they able? Do they themselves know, and live, and teach the Gospel? These Readers? Can, then, either they or I, or you, always find something to read to our congregation, which will be as exactly adapted to their wants, and as much blessed to them, as our preaching? And here is another difficulty still: What authority have I to forbid their doing what I believe God has called them to do? I apprehend, indeed, that there ought, if possible, to be both an outward and inward call to this work: yet, if one of the two be supposed wanting, I would rather want the outward than the inward call. I rejoice that I am called to preach the Gospel, both by God and man. Yet, I acknowledge, I would rather have the divine without the human, than the human without the divine call.

" But waving this, and supposing these four Societies to be better provided for than they were before: what becomes of the other thirty? Will they prosper as well when they are left as sheep without a shepherd? The experiment has been tried again and again; and always with the same effect: even the strong in faith grew weak and faint; many of the weak made shipwreck of the faith. The awakened fell asleep; sinners changed for a while, returned as a dog to the vomit. And so, by our lack of service, many of the souls perished for whom Christ died. Now, had we willingly withdrawn our service from them, by voluntarily settling in one place, what account of this could we have given to the great Shepherd of all our souls?

"I cannot therefore see, how any of those four Preachers, or any other in like circumstances, can ever, while they have health and strength, ordained or unordained, fix in one place, without a grievous wound to their own conscience, and damage to the *general* work of God. Yet, I trust I am open to conviction; and your farther thoughts on this or any subject, will be always acceptable to,

"Rev. and dear Sir,
"Your affectionate Brother,
"And fellow-labourer,
"JOHN WESLEY."

Mr. Wesley always supposed, that God's design in raising up the Methodists, so called, was, 'To reform the nation, especially the church; and to spread scriptural holiness over the land." He therefore still greatly wished that the clergy would co-operate with him; or at least favourably receive those who, in their several parishes, were turned from ignorance and profaneness to true religion. This, in general, was not the case. However, some were of a better mind. The above-mentioned Mr. Walker of Truro, in Cornwall, and a few others, not only loved and preached the Gospel, but were well disposed towards him, and those under his care. Some of these gentlemen assisted at the first Conferences. But, after some years, they seemed unwilling to share in his reproach. To avoid this, they desired that he would give up his Societies, which were formed in their respective parishes, into their care. As this proposal involves a question, which, it has sometimes been thought, he could not easily answer, viz. "If you love the church, why do not you give up your people to those in the church, whom you yourself believe to be real Ministers of Christ?" I shall insert his reply to the above-mentioned gentleman, who wrote to him on the subject, in behalf of himself and his brethren.

"*Helston, Cornwall*, Sept. 16, 1757.

"Rev and dear Sir,

"Nothing can be more kind than the mentioning to me whatever you think is amiss in my conduct. And the more freedom you use in doing this, the more I am indebted to you. I am thoroughly persuaded that you 'wish me well:' and that it is this, together with a 'concern for the common interests of religion,' which obliges you to speak with more plainness than otherwise you would. The same motives induce me to lay aside all reserve, and tell you the naked sentiments of my heart.

"You say, 'If you believed Mr. V. to be a gracious person and a Gospel-Minister, why did you not in justice to your people, leave them to him?'

"J. H. assured me, that Mr. V. had a clear conviction of his being reconciled to God. If so, I could not deny his being a gracious person. And I heard him preach the *true*, though not the *whole* Gospel. But had it been the whole, there are several reasons still, why I did not give up the people to him. 1. No one mentioned or intimated any such thing, nor did it once enter into my thoughts. But if it had, 2. I do not know, that every one who preaches the truth, has wisdom and experience to govern a flock: I do not know that Mr. V. in particular has. He may, or he may not. 3. I do not know whether he would or could give that flock, all the advantages for holiness which they now enjoy: and to leave them to him, before I was assured of this, would be neither justice nor mercy. 4. Unless *they* were also assured of this, they could not, in conscience, give up themselves to him. And I have neither right nor power to dispose of them contrary to their conscience.

" 'But they are his already by legal establishment.' If they receive the sacrament from him thrice a year, and attend his ministrations on the Lord's day, I see no more which the Law requires. But, to go a little deeper into this matter of *legal establishment*. Does Mr. C. or you think, that the King and Parliament have a right to prescribe to me, what Pastor I shall use? If they prescribe one which I know God never sent, am I obliged to receive him? If he be sent of God, can I receive him with a clear conscience till I know he is? And even when I do, if I believe my former pastor is more profitable to my soul, can I leave him without sin? Or, has any man living a right to require this of me?

" I 'extend this to every Gospel-Minister in England.' Before I could, with a clear conscience, leave a Methodist Society even to such a one, all these considerations must come in.

" And with regard to the people: far from thinking, that ' the withdrawing our Preachers' from such a Society without their consent, would prevent a separation from the church, I think it would be the direct way to cause it. While we are with them, our advice has weight, and keeps many of them to the church. But were we totally to withdraw, it would be of little or no weight. Nay, perhaps, resentment of our unkindness, (as it would appear to them,) would prompt them to act in flat opposition to it.

"Again, you say, 'Before a union can be effected, something must be done on your part.' Tell me what, and I will do it without delay, however contrary it may be to my ease or natural inclination: provided only, that it consists with my keeping a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man. It would not consist with this, to give up the flock under my care to any other Minister, till I and they were convinced, they would have the same advantages for holiness under him, which they now enjoy.

"But, 'paying us visits, can serve no other purpose than to bring us under needless difficulties.' I will speak very freely on this head. Can our conversing together serve no other purpose? You seem, then, not to have the least conception of *your own* want of any such thing! But whether you do or not, I feel my want: I am not *in memet totus teres atque rotundus*.* I want more light, more strength, for my personal walking with God. And I know not but he may give it me through you. And whether you do or not, I want more light and strength for guiding the flock committed to my charge. May not the Lord send this also, by whom he will send? And by you as probably as by another? It is not improbable, that he may by you give me clearer light, either as to doctrine or discipline. And even hereby, how much comfort and profit might redound to thousands of those, for whom Christ hath died? Which I apprehend would abundantly compensate any *difficulties* that might arise from such conversation.

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*I am not all-sufficient.

"*I speak as a fool:* Bear with me. I am clearly satisfied that you have far more faith, more love, and more of the mind which was in Christ, than I have. But have you more gifts for the work of God? Or more fruit of your labour? Has God owned you more? I would he had, a thousand fold! I pray God, that he may! Have you at present more experience of the wisdom of the world and the devices of Satan? Or of the manner and method wherein it pleases God to counterwork them in this period of his providence? Are you sure, God would add nothing to you by me, (beside what he might add to me by you?) Perhaps, when the time is slipt out of your hands, when I am no more seen, you may wish you had not rejected the assistance of even

"Your affectionate brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."

"To the Rev. Mr. Walker,
in Truro."

That he sincerely wished to unite with every Minister of the Church of England, who lived and preached the Gospel, is evident from his whole behaviour towards them, and from many passages in his Journals. A few years after the above correspondence with Mr. Walker, he wrote to all those Clergymen, who, he believed, answered the above description; proposing, in the fulness of his heart, that they should unite to forward the real work of God in the souls of men. His letter upon that occasion is as follows:

" Rev. Sir,

" Near two years and a half ago, I wrote the following letter. You will please to observe, That I propose no more therein, than is the bounden duty of every Christian: That *you* may comply with this proposal, whether any other does or not. I myself have endeavoured so to do for many years, though I have been almost alone therein; and although many, the more earnestly I *talk of peace*, the more zealously *make themselves ready for battle.*

" I am, Rev. Sir,
" Your affectionate brother,
" JOHN WESLEY."

" Dear Sir.

" It has pleased God to give you both the will and the power, to do many things for his glory. This induces me to mention to you, what has been upon my mind for many years: and what I am persuaded would be much for the glory of God, if it could once be effected. And I am in great hopes it will be, if you heartily undertake it, trusting in him alone.

" Some years since, God began a great work in England: but the labourers were few. At first those few were of one heart: but it was not so long. First one fell off, then another, till no two of us were left together in the work, beside my brother and me. This prevented much good, and occasioned much evil. It grieved our spirits, and weakened our hands.

It gave our common enemies huge occasion to blaspheme. It perplexed and puzzled many sincere Christians. It caused many to draw back to perdition. It grieved the Holy Spirit of God.

" But ought this to be? Ought not those who are united to one common Head, and employed by him in one common work, to be united to each other? I speak now of those labourers, who are Ministers of the Church of England.

" Not excluding any who agree in these essentials:

" I. Original sin.

" II. Justification by faith.

" III. Holiness of heart and life: provided their life be answerable to their doctrine.

" ' But *what union* would you desire among these?' Not an union in *opinions*. They might agree or disagree, touching absolute decrees on the one hand, and perfection on the other. Not an union in *expressions*. These may still speak of the *imputed righteousness*, and those of the *merits of Christ*. Not an union, with regard to *outward order*. Some may still remain *quite regular*; some *quite irregular*; and some *partly regular* and *partly irregular*. But these things being as they are, as each is persuaded in his own mind, is it not a most desirable thing, that we should,—

" 1. Remove hinderances out of the way? Not *judge* one another, not *despise* one another, not *envy* one another? Not be *displeased* at one another's *gifts* or *success*, even though greater than our own? Not *wait* for one another's halting, much less *wish* for it, or *rejoice* therein?

" Never *speak* disrespectfully,* slightly, coldly, or unkindly of each other: Never *repeat* each other's faults, mistakes, or infirmities, much less *listen* for and *gather* them up: Never say or do any thing to hinder each other's usefulness, either directly or indirectly?

" Is it not a most desirable thing, that we should, 2. *Love as brethren?* *Think well of* and *honour* one another? *Wish* all good, all grace, all gifts, all success, yea, greater than our own, to each other? *Expect* God will answer our wish, *rejoice* in every appearance thereof, and *praise* him for it? *Readily believe* good of each other, as readily as we once believed evil?

" *Speak* respectfully, honourably, kindly of each other: *defend* each other's character: speak all the good we can of each other: recommend one another where we have influence: each *help* the other on in his work, and *enlarge* his influence by all the honest means we can?

" This is the *union* which I have long sought after. And is it not the duty of every one of us so to do? Would it not be far better for *ourselves*. A means of promoting both our holiness and happiness? Would it not remove much *guilt* from those who have been faulty in any of these instances? And much *pain* from those who have kept themselves pure? Would it not be far better for the *people:* who suffer severely from the clashings and contentions of their leaders, which seldom fail to occasion many unprofitable, yea, hurtful disputes among them? Would it not be better even for the poor, blind *world*, robbing them of their sport; 'O they cannot agree among themselves?' Would it not be better for the *whole work* of God, which would then be deepened and extended on every side?

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* The conduct which Mr. Wesley here recommends to be observed by himself, and the Clergy, towards each other, is the absolute duty of all private Christians, and especially of all the Preachers of the Gospel. And if one or two of our brethren have acted contrary thereto, and have written or spoken disrespectfully of the pious Ministers of the Church of England, or of those of any other denomination, it ought only be considered as the improper conduct of individuals, and by no means as the act of the body of Preachers or People.

"'But it will never be: it is utterly impossible.' Certainly it is *with men*. Who imagines *we* can do this? That it can be effected by any *human power?* All nature is against it, every infirmity, every *wrong temper* and *passion;* love of honour and praise, of power, of pre-eminence; or anger, resentment, pride; long-contracted habit, and prejudice lurking in ten thousand forms. The *devil* and all his angels are against it. For, if this take place, how shall his kingdom stand? All the *world*, all that know not God, are against it, though they may seem to favour it for a season. Let us settle this in our hearts, that we may be utterly cut off from all dependence on our own strength or wisdom.

"But surely *with God all things are possible.* Therefore, 'all things are possible to him that believeth.' And this union is proposed only to them that believe, that shew *their* faith by *their* works.

"When Mr. C. was objecting the impossibility of ever effecting such an union, I went up stairs, and after a little prayer, opened Kempis on these words:

"'Expecta Dominum: viriliter age: noli diffidere:

dere: noli discedere: sed corpus et animam expone constanter pro gloria Dei.'*

"I am, dear Sir,
"Your affectionate servant,
"JOHN WESLEY.

"*Scarborough*, April 29, 1764."

Of thirty-four Clergymen, to whom he addressed the above, only three vouchsafed him an answer! The one which he received from the late vicar of Shoreham, in Kent, is such a picture of that blessed man, (now with God,) that I doubt not but it will be acceptable to the reader.

"Shoreham, April, 1764.

"My Rev. and dear Brother,

"Your's of the 19th instant, gave me both pain and pleasure.

"I was highly delighted with your ardent wishes and endeavours for promoting the *spirit* of the *gospel* among the *Preachers* and other *Professors* of it:—but deeply concerned at the disappointment and opposition you have met with!

"It has been always a *leading principle* with me, (and I pray God confirm and strengthen it more and more,) to *love* all those *labourers of Christ*, who give proof by their *diligence*, their *holy* and *heavenly behaviour*, that they *love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity;* even though *their sentiments*, in many things, should differ from *mine*.

"And therefore, though it be *absurd* to expect an intire *union of sentiments* in all things;—yet, the endeavouring, by every Christian method, to

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* Wait upon the Lord: play the man: doubt not: shrink not; but sacrifice soul and body continually for the glory of God.

'keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,'—is the indispensable duty of all Christians. Where this *spiritual peace and union* are not—there *faith working by love* is not: and where this *divine faith* is wanting,—there *Christ is wanting:* there his *Spirit is wanting:* and then, 'neither circumcision nor uncircumcision will avail us any thing!'

"In this melancholy situation, whilst we are strangers to the *divine fruits* of the *Holy Spirit,*—let our *gifts* and *talents* be what they may,— let us *speak with the tongues of men and of angels;* we are yet *nothing* in the sight of God! Nay, though his *Spirit* should spread the *Gospel,* by our ministry, in the hearts of thousands; yet, our own souls will remain but a *barren wilderness*! and *Christ* may say,—'I never knew you.'

"How ought we, therefore, always to pray,—that 'the peace of God may ever rule in our hearts:' —that we may be *rooted and grounded in love;* and that we may constantly 'follow after the things which make for peace;' and things wherewith one may edify another!

"This is the *Gospel of Jesus Christ.* And may God impress it thoroughly upon the *minds and hearts* of all!—And may the poor 'despised flock' grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

"I am, dear Sir,
"Your's most affectionately,
"VINCENT PERRONET."

Those remarkably pious and laborious Ministers of Christ, the late Rev. Mr. Grimshaw, Rector of Haworth, in Yorkshire, and Mr. Fletcher, Vicar of

Madeley, above mentioned, were of the same spirit with Mr. Perronet, and joined heartily with Mr. Wesley in promoting the important work of reformation, in which he was engaged. The latter is well known from his numerous and excellent writings on various important subjects of divinity, as well as from the account of his life, which has been long in circulation. Of the former, Mr. Wesley speaks as follows, in his Journal:

" Mr. Grimshaw was born September 3, 1708, at Brindle, six miles south of Preston, in Lancashire, and educated at the schools of Blackburn and Heskin, in the same county. Even then the thoughts of death and judgment made some impression upon him. At eighteen he was admitted at Christ's College, in Cambridge. Here bad example so carried him away, that for more than two years he seemed utterly to have lost all sense of seriousness; which did not revive till the day he was ordained Deacon, in the year 1731. On that day he was much affected with a sense of the importance of the ministerial office. And this was increased by his conversing with some at Rochdale, who met once a week to read and pray.

"About the year 1734, he left off all his diversions, began to catechise the young people, to preach the absolute necessity of a devout life; and to visit his people, not in order to be merry with them as before, but to press them to seek the salvation of their souls.

" At this period also, he began himself to pray in secret four times a day. And the God of all grace, who prepared his heart to pray, soon gave the answer to his prayer; not indeed, as he expected, in joy or peace, but by bringing upon him very strong and painful convictions of his own guilt, and helplessness,

lessness, and misery; by discovering to him what he did not suspect before, that his heart was deceitful and desperately wicked; and what was more afflicting still, that all his duties and labours could not procure him pardon, or gain him a title to eternal life. In this trouble he continued more than three years, not acquainting any one with the distress he suffered; till one day, (in 1742,) being in the utmost agony of mind, there was clearly represented to him, Jesus Christ pleading for him with God the Father, and gaining a free pardon for him. In that moment all his fears vanished away, and he was filled with joy unspeakable. 'I was now,' says he, 'willing to renounce myself, and to embrace Christ for my all in all. O what light and comfort did I enjoy in my own soul, and what a taste of the pardoning love of God!'

"All this time he was an entire stranger to the people called Methodists, whom afterwards he thought it his duty to countenance, and to labour with in his neighbourhood. He was an entire stranger also to all their writings, till he came to Haworth. And then the good effects of his preaching soon became visible. Many of his flock were brought into deep concern for salvation, and were, in a little time after, filled with peace and joy through believing. And, as in ancient times, the whole congregation have been often seen in tears, on account of their provocations against God, and under a sense of his goodness in yet sparing them.

"His lively manner of representing the truths of God, could not fail of being much talked of, and bringing many hundreds out of curiosity to Haworth church; who received so much benefit by what they heard, that when the novelty was long over, the church continued to be full of people, many of whom came from far, and this for twenty years together.*

"Mr. Grimshaw was now too happy himself in the knowledge of Christ, to rest satisfied, without taking every method, he thought likely, to spread the knowledge of his God and Saviour. And as the very indigent constantly make their want of better clothes, to appear in, an excuse for not coming to church in the day-time, he contrived, for them chiefly, a lecture on Sunday evenings, though he had preached and read prayers twice in the day before. God was pleased to give great success to these attempts, which animated him still more to spend, and be spent for Christ. So the next year he began a method, which was continued by him ever after, of preaching in each of the four hamlets he had under his care, three times every month. By this means, the old and infirm, who could not attend the church, had the truth of God brought to their houses; and many, who were so profane as to make the distance from the house of God a reason for scarce ever coming to it, were allured to hear. By this time, the great labour with which he instructed his own people; the holiness of his conversation, and the benefit, which very many from the neighbouring parishes had obtained by attending his ministry; concurred to bring upon him many earnest entreaties to come to their houses, and expound the Word of God to souls as ignorant as they had been themselves. This request he did not dare to refuse: so that while he provided abundantly for his own flock, he annually found opportunity of preaching near three hundred times, to congregations in other parts.

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* "Thin Congregations," says Mr. Arthur Young, "whether in town or country are always the fault of the Clergy. I never heard a really good, impressive Preacher, who delivered the doctrines of the Gospel, and not those of so many modern Divines, and who seemed truly to feel the truth and importance of what he uttered, without finding a numerous and attentive assembly."

" And for a course of fifteen years, or upwards, he used to preach every week, fifteen, twenty, and sometimes thirty times, besides visiting the sick, and other occasional duties of his function. It is not easy to ascribe such unwearied diligence, chiefly among the poor, to any motive but the real one. He thought he would never keep silence, while he could speak to the honour of that God, who had done so much for his soul. And while he saw sinners perishing for lack of knowledge, and no one breaking to them the bread of life, he was constrained, notwithstanding the reluctance he felt within, to give up his name to still greater reproach, as well as all his time and strength, to the work of the ministry.

" During this intense application to what was the delight of his heart, God was exceeding favourable to him. In sixteen years he was only once suspended from his labour by sickness, though he dared all weathers, upon the bleak mountains, and used his body with less compassion, than a merciful man would use his beast. His soul at various times enjoyed large manifestations of God's love; and he drank deep into his Spirit. His cup ran over, and at some seasons his faith was so strong, and his hope so abundant, that higher degrees of spiritual delight would have overpowered his mortal frame.

"In this manner Mr. Grimshaw employed all his powers and talents even to his last illness. And his labours were not in vain in the Lord. He saw an effectual change take place in many of his flock; and a restraint from the commission of sin brought upon the parish in general. He saw the name of Jesus exalted, and many souls happy in the knowledge of him, and walking as became the gospel. Happy he was himself, in being kept by the power of God unblamable in his conversation: happy in being beloved in several of the last years of his life, by every one in his parish; who, whether they would be persuaded by him to forsake the evil of their ways, or not, had no doubt that Mr. Grimshaw was their cordial friend. Hence, at his departure, a general concern was visible through his parish. Hence, his body was interred with what is more ennobling than all the pomp of a royal funeral: for he was followed to the grave by a great multitude, with affectionate sighs and many tears; who cannot still hear his much-loved name without weeping for the guide of their souls, to whom each of them was dear as children to their father.

"His behaviour throughout his last sickness, was of a piece with the last twenty years of his life. From the very first attack of his fever, he welcomed its approach. His intimate knowledge of Christ abolished all the reluctance nature feels to a dissolution; and triumphing in Him, who is the resurrection and the life, he departed April the 7th, 1763, in the 55th year of his age, and the twenty-first of eminent usefulness."

About this time the Lord poured out his Spirit in a remarkable manner in divers places, producing in the minds of men, by the preaching of the word, a deep religious concern, serious, and divine impressions, and their consequent fruits, in so great a degree, that more were frequently reformed in a few months, or even weeks or days, at such times, than for several years before. Many parts of these kingdoms have been thus favoured at different seasons, as London, at the time I am speaking of, and the West of Yorkshire, and Cornwall, of late years. The consequence of these effusions of the Holy Spirit has always been a great and conspicuous revival of genuine piety and virtue, manifested by all the inward and outward fruits of righteousness, although often intermixed with some apparent irregularity and disorder in the meetings. Meantime, the crowds that have flocked to hear, have been so immense, that no places of worship, however large, have been able to contain them. In or about the year 1762, at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Mr. Wesley was obliged to preach in the open air, even at five in the morning.

Many years before his death, Mr. Wesley had the happiness of seeing religion greatly increased in the nation. In every county, and in most of the towns and villages, Societies were formed, and Chapels erected for public worship. These were supplied by a continually increasing number of Itinerant Preachers, assisted by many hundreds of Local Preachers. Nevertheless Mr. Wesley's great desire to remain in union with the Church of England, so far as the work he was engaged in would permit, would not allow him to apply for a legal establishment, or for any thing, which might give the Societies under his care the form of ‘ a separate body of people ;’ his design being, neither in whole nor in part, to form a sect, or party, or church, but merely to spread genuine piety and virtue in the nation.

From this time he held on his way, with little interruption. Though now declining in the vale of years, he slackened not his pace. He still rose at four in the morning, preached two, three, or four times a day, and travelled between four and five thousand miles a year, going once in two years through Great Britain and Ireland. He saw continually more and more fruit of his labour, and of the labour of those in connection with him. He laid *no stress* on opinions or modes of worship, desiring only that the love of God and man through living faith in Christ, as “ God manifest in the flesh,” should be the ruling principle of the life, and shew itself by an uniform practice of justice, mercy, and truth. He accordingly gave the right-hand of fellowship to all who walked by this rule, however they might differ from him in those speculative points, of which they were to give an account to God alone.

SECTION XIII.

OF HIS VISITING IRELAND, AND OF THE SUCCESS OF HIS LABOURS, AND OF THE LABOURS OF THE PREACHERS IN CONNECTION WITH HIM IN THAT KINGDOM.

AS Mr. Wesley had but one design from the commencement of his ministry, and which he invariably pursued till his spirit returned to God, viz. to be as useful as possible to his fellow-creatures, especially in matters that concerned their salvation; so he never said, upon any success which he met with, "It is enough." In this respect, also, as well as in relation to his own progress in the divine life, he "forgot the things behind, and reached forth to those before." The same he continually inculcated upon those that laboured with him, in giving them, at their admission, the charge above mentioned. "Observe, it is not your business to preach so many times, or to take care of this or that Society, but to save as many souls as you can; to bring as many sinners, as you possibly can, to repentance; and with all your power to build them up in that holiness, without which, they cannot see the Lord." Agreeably to this, they have, from the beginning, gone from place to place; and having formed Societies of *those who*, as far as they could judge, *turned to God*, (for they took charge of none else,) they immediately visited new places, beginning to preach generally in the open air, in a private house, or barn, or market-house, or wherever a congregation could be assembled, and hear the word without molestation.

Until the year 1747, they had confined their labours to England, in most parts of which they had preached and formed Societies, though frequently at the peril of their lives. But this year, their line was stretched a little further. One of the Lay-Preachers had gone over to Dublin; and, after preaching there for some time, formed a Society. He wrote an account of his success to Mr. Wesley, who determined to visit Ireland immediately. Accordingly, on Tuesday, August the 4th, 1747, he set out from Bristol, and passing through Wales, arrived in Dublin on Sunday the 9th, about ten o'clock in the forenoon.

Monday 10, he met the Society at five, and at six preached, on "Repent ye and believe the Gospel." The room, large as it was, would not contain the people, who all *seemed* to taste the good word.

The house, then used for preaching, was situated in Marlborough-street, and was originally designed for a Lutheran church. It contained about four hundred people: but four or five times the number might stand in the yard, which was very spacious. An immense multitude assembled there to hear him, on Monday evening, among whom were many of the rich, and Ministers of all denominations. He spoke strongly and closely, on "The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe;" and observes, that no person seemed offended. All, for the present at least, seemed convinced that he *spake as the oracles of God.*

The next day he waited on the Archbishop. They conversed for two or three hours, in which time he answered an abundance of objections. He continued to preach morning and evening to large congregations, and had more and more reason to hope they would not all be unfruitful hearers.

"Having examined the Society, which then consisted of about two hundred and eighty members, and explained at large the *Rules*, (already laid before the reader,) he sailed for England, leaving Mr. Williams and Mr. Trembath to take care of this little flock. Many of these, he observes, were strong in faith, and of an exceeding teachable spirit: and therefore, on this account, should be watched over with the more care, as being almost equally susceptible of good or ill impressions.

Mr. Charles Wesley went over shortly after, and preached in Dublin, and in other parts of the kingdom, chiefly Cork, Athlone, and Bandon: and had reason to bless God, that in every place he saw fruit of his labours. Near Athlone he was in imminent hazard of his life. For, within about a mile of the town, he was way-laid by a numerous Popish mob, which he very narrowly escaped, by setting spurs to his horse. But this had a happy effect, as it prejudiced all the Protestants in his favour. Soon after this, Mr. John Wesley published an Address to the Roman Catholics: a very small tract; but clearly stating the points wherein we agree, and wherein we differ; and equally conspicuous for argument and temper.

The Society in Dublin enjoyed their sunshine but for a little time. A persecution commenced, on which Mr. Trembath, in a letter to Mr. Wesley, makes the following observations. "I believe this persecution was permitted for good, that we might not trust in an arm of flesh. We thought that the Magistrates would do us justice; but in this we were disappointed. It likewise drives us all to prayer and watchfulness, and also causes us to love each other better than ever: so that we are like sheep driven by the wolf into the fold. When we went out, we carried our lives in our hands; but all this did not hinder us once from meeting together at the usual hours. The Society still increased, and those who had the root in themselves stood like marble pillars: and by the grace of God, were resolved rather to die with Christ, than to deny him. All the city was in an uproar: some said, 'it is a shame; the men do no harm.' Others said, 'the dogs deserve all to be hanged.' Blessed be God, we walk unhurt in fire! Now we can literally say, we live by faith: and the less we have of human help, the more we shall have of divine."

Mr. Wesley, accompanied by Messrs. Meriton and Swindells, arrived early in the spring of the following year, 1748, before his brother sailed for England. He no longer confined himself to the house, but preached on Oxmantown-Green, adjoining the Barrack. He preached also at Newgate; and, after a few days spent in Dublin, he visited many parts of the country. In several places he was constrained to preach in the open air, by reason of the multitudes that attended. Many of the soldiers also, in every place, gladly heard the word, and forty troopers were at this time members of the Society at Philipstown. In many of the towns in the provinces of Leinster and Munster, and in some of Connaught, Societies were formed, which have increased continually since that time, and have adorned the doctrine of God their Saviour. What he had to encounter, even when no violence was offered to him, we may learn from a passage in his Journal.

"Tuesday, May 3, 1748. I rode to Birr, twenty miles from Athlone; and the key of the Sessions-house not being to be found, declared 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,' in the street, to a dull, rude, senseless multitude. Many laughed the greater part of the time. Some went away just in the middle of a sentence. And yet, when one cried out, (a Carmelite Friar, Clerk to the Priest,) 'You lie, you lie:' the zealous Protestants cried out, 'Knock him down.'

And

And it was no sooner said than done. I saw some bustle, but knew not what was the matter, till the whole was over."

But the Lord gave a balance to this contempt. For on the 10th, when he left Athlone, (which he visited after Birr,) he with much difficulty broke away from that *immeasurably loving people*, (to use his own expression ;) and not so soon as he imagined neither; for when he drew near to the turnpike, about a mile from the city, a multitude waited for him at the top of the hill. They fell back on each side, to make him way, and then joined, and closed him in. After singing two or three verses, he put forward, when on a sudden he was surprised by such a cry of men, women, and children, as he never heard before. "Yet a little while," said he, speaking of this interesting occurrence, "and we shall meet to part no more; and sorrow and sighing shall flee away for ever."

On his return to Dublin, he spent some days there previous to his departure for England. On one of these days, while he was preaching on the Green near the Barrack, a man cried out, "Aye, he is a Jesuit: that is plain." To which a Popish Priest, who happened to be near, replied, "No, he is not. I would to God he were!"

Soon after he sailed, the zealous mob, who for some time had greatly incommoded those who attended at the Preaching-house in Marlborough-street, made an attack in form. They abused the Preacher, and the congregation, in a very gross manner. They then pulled down the pulpit, and carrying it, with the benches, into the street, made a large fire of them, round which they shouted for several hours.

" Those Preachers, who remained in the kingdom, continued their labour with much success. Mr. Swindells visited Limerick, one of the most considerable cities in the province of Munster. The Lord much blessed his labours there, so that a Society was soon formed; and the religious impression was so great on the inhabitants in general, that Mr. Wesley observes, on his visit to that city the following year, that he found no opposition; but every one seemed to say, 'Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.'"

But in Cork the scene was very different. For more than three months, a riotous mob, headed by a ballad-singer, whose name was Butler, had declared open war against these new reformers, and all who attended their preaching. To give a detail of their violence would be almost too shocking to human nature. They fell upon men and women, old and young, with clubs and swords, and beat and wounded them in a dreadful manner. But they were not content with thus abusing the people when attending the preaching. They surrounded their houses, wounded their customers, broke their windows, and threatened to pull their houses down, unless they would engage *to leave this way!* The common epithets used on those occasions, by Butler and his party, were *heretic dogs*, and *heretic b——s:* and several, even of the Magistrates, rather encouraged than strove to prevent these disorders.

In the midst of this brutality and injustice, religion shed her cheering light, and diffused happiness almost at the gates of the city. At Rathcormick, within about twelve miles of Cork, the Rev. Mr. Lloyd, the Rector, had received Mr. Wesley into his church, and sincerely strove to advance the good work in which he was engaged. A letter received from that Gentleman about this time, forms a striking contrast to the disorders just recited.

"Rev. Sir,

"Your favour of the 15th instant, I received the 22d. I am more satisfied than ever, that you aim at nothing, but what has an immediate tendency to the glory of God, and the salvation of mankind.

"I cannot help thinking, that your design, considered in this light, (allowing even of some mistakes,) must be deemed very praise-worthy. As to myself, in particular, I must own it gives me infinite satisfaction, to find that you have spoken to so good an effect, in our town and neighbourhood. My church is more frequented than ever it was; and I have the pleasure of seeing a greater decency, and more of zeal and attention, than I could have dared to promise myself: which has also this effect upon me, that I find myself better disposed than ever, to distribute to those who attend my ministry, such food, as may yield them comfort here, and happiness hereafter. I heartily wish this may continue, and that the people may not cool. If so, we may hope to see wickedness generally decline, and virtue and godliness take place. I see this work of your's, through God's blessing, thus successfully carried on, without any ill-will or jealousy, and could wish that all the Clergy were, in that respect, of the same mind with me.

"Your Society here keeps up well; and is, I believe, considerably increased since you left it. I frequently attend the preaching; and though I am much reflected on for it, this does not in any-wise discourage me. While I am conscious to myself that I do no harm, I am careless of what men can say of me.

"Michael Poor, lately a Romanist, who is now of your Society, read his recantation on Sunday last.—Pray let us know, when you or your brother intend for this kingdom and town; for be sure, none wish more sincerely to see and converse with you than I, who am sincerely,

"Rev. and dear Sir,
"Your very affectionate
"Brother and Servant,
Aug. 29, 1749. "RICHARD LLOYD."

In consequence of the shameful refusal of justice above-mentioned, the rioters continued the same outrages during the greater part of the following winter. At the Lent assizes, the Preachers, (who made up the whole number then travelling in the kingdom, or at least, as many of them as had ever been at Cork, or its neighbourhood,) assembled at the house of a Mr. Jones, (a considerable merchant, and a member of the Society,) and went from thence in a body to the Court, accompanied by Mr. Jones, and other reputable inhabitants. His Majesty's Judge behaved as became him. He inquired where were the persons presented. On their being pointed out to him, he seemed for some time visibly agitated, and unable to proceed. He at length called for the evidence, on which Butler appeared. On his saying, in answer to the first question, that he was a ballad-singer, the Judge desired him to withdraw, observing, That it was a pity *he* had not been presented; no other person

appearing,

appearing, he turned to the Preachers, and said, "Gentlemen, there is no evidence against you: you may retire: I am sorry that you have been treated so very improperly. I hope the police of this city will be better attended to for the time to come."

It was now generally believed there would be no more riots in Cork. But the flame of persecution was not yet extinct. Mr. Wesley arrived in Ireland in the month of April, 1750; and having preached in Dublin, and the intermediate places, he arrived in Cork: and at the repeated invitation of Mr. Alderman Pembrock, came to his house. On the morrow, being the Lord's-day, he went, about eight o'clock, to Hammond's Marsh, being informed that the usual place of preaching would by no means contain those who desired to hear. The congregation was large and attentive. A few of the rabble gathered at a distance; but by little and little they drew near, and mixed with the congregation; and he preached to as quiet and orderly an assembly, as he could have met with in any church in England or Ireland.

In the afternoon, however, it was otherwise. While Mr. Wesley was preaching in the house at five, the town drummers and serjeants, having received orders from the Mayor, came down with an innumerable mob attending them. They continued drumming, and Mr. Wesley continued preaching, till he had finished his discourse. When he came out, the mob immediately closed him in. Observing one of the serjeants standing by, he desired him to keep the King's peace: but he replied, "Sir, I have *no orders* to do that." As soon as he came into the street, the rabble threw whatever came to hand. But all went by him, or flew over his head; nor did one thing touch him. He walked on straight through the middle of the rabble, looking every man before him in the face: and they opened on the right and left, till he came near Dant's Bridge. A large party had taken possession of this, one of whom was bawling out, "Now, hey for the Romans!" When he came up, *they* likewise shrunk back, and he walked through them to Mr. Jenkins' house. But a Romanist stood just within the door, and endeavoured to hinder him from going in; till one of the mob, (aiming at Mr. Wesley, but missing him,) knocked down the Romanist. He then went in, and God restrained the wild beasts, so that no one attempted to follow him.

But many of the congregation were more roughly handled; particularly Mr. Jones, who was covered with dirt, and escaped with his life almost by miracle. The main body of the mob then went to the house, brought out all the seats and benches, tore up the floor, the door, the frames of the windows, and whatever of wood-work remained; part of which they carried off for their own use, and the rest they burnt in the open street.

Finding there was no probability of their dispersing, Mr. Wesley sent to Alderman Pembrock, who immediately desired Mr. Alderman Winthrop, his nephew, to go down to him at Mr. Jenkins': with whom he walked up the street, none giving him an unkind or disrespectful word.

Monday 21. He rode on to Bandon. From three in the afternoon till past seven, the mob of Cork marched in grand procession, and then burnt him in effigy near Dant's Bridge.

While they were so busily employed, Mr. Haughton, one of the Preachers, took the opportunity of going down to Hammond's Marsh. He called at a friend's house there: where the good woman in great care, locked him in. But observing many people were met, he threw up the sash, and preached to them out of the window. Many seemed deeply affected, even of those who had been persecutors before. And they all retired quietly to their several homes, before the mob was at leisure to attend them.

Shortly after these riots in Cork, Butler went to Waterford, and raised disturbances in that city. But happening to quarrel with some who were as ready to shed blood as himself, his right arm was cut off in the fray. Being thus disabled, the wretch dragged on the remainder of his life in unpitied misery. His fellow-rioters at Cork, were intimidated by the soldiers in garrison, many of whom began now to attend the preaching. At length peace was restored: and the next time Mr. Wesley visited that city, he preached without disturbance. A large Preaching-house was soon after built, in which the people quietly assembled.

There are few places, where religion has prospered more than in Cork. "Being reviled for the name of Christ, the Spirit of glory and of God has rested upon them:" and many have been the living and dying witnesses of the power of true religion. The principal inhabitants have been long convinced of the folly and wickedness of the authors and encouragers of those persecutions; and on a visit, some years after, the Mayor invited Mr. Wesley to the

Mansion-house, and seemed to consider his company as an honour.

Several circuits were now formed. The Preachers, who came over with Mr. Wesley from time to time, visited the Societies regularly, and preached in new places, as the way was opened for them. Several Preachers were also raised up among the natives: men, who, after they had found acceptance with God themselves, and seen the deplorable state of the people around them, had no rest till they declared the way of salvation. Some of these had been Romanists, and for many years depended for salvation on the pageantry and forms, used by men as wicked as themselves. These were as flames of fire, when they found the *new and living way* of faith in Christ, and love to God and man. They laboured and suffered, if by any means they might save souls from death.

The late Mr. Thomas Walsh was an eminent instance of this kind. His conversion was conspicuous; his communion with God was deep and solid, and his labours and sufferings remarkable. His Journal is well worth the attention of all the disciples of Christ; especially as it clearly shews what the Preachers of that day had to encounter, in testifying the gospel of the grace of God. He preached with great success in many parts of Ireland and England. But his soul chiefly mourned over the poor ignorant people of that communion which he had renounced. For their sakes he often preached in Irish, which he perfectly understood: and many of them were thereby turned to God. But, as one observes, his soul was too large for his body. At the age of twenty-eight, he died an old, old man, being worn out by his great and uninterrupted labours.

The work of God had hitherto extended only to the three Southern provinces: it now began also in Ulster. The people of this province are mostly members of the Establishment, or Protestant Dissenters. And they are well employed. The Linen-manufacture has given a spur to industry, which has been exceeding friendly to the progress of religion. In some parts of this province, the Romanists are numerous; but still they bear a small proportion to the bulk of the inhabitants. Here the word of the Lord has had indeed free course, and is glorified. Mr. Wesley always visited this part of the kingdom with peculiar pleasure. The poorest of the people receive the truth with all readiness of mind; and many of them are *rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom.*

The circuits were now regularly supplied. The same discipline was observed in all the Societies, and Mr. Wesley began to hold Conferences with the Preachers, as with those in England. By this means the work of religion was greatly forwarded. Love to God, and love to man, abounded more and more; and those who before were either deplorably ignorant and wicked, or rested in the form of godliness, now "worshiped God in the spirit, rejoiced in Christ Jesus, and had no confidence in the flesh."

Those who have travelled through Ireland, need not be informed, how difficult of access many parts of that kingdom are, especially in the province of Ulster. But the love of God and man forces its way through every difficulty. In villages and scattered cottages, surrounded with mountains or bogs, and out of all road, pure religion and undefiled has diffused her cheering rays, gladdening the wilderness. It may be truly said,

> "Hark! the wastes have found a voice;
> Lonely deserts now rejoice."

Many of the poorest of the people are so well instructed in the Holy Scriptures, that they need not be ashamed to give an account of the hope that is in them, before the most pious and learned of the nation!

A remarkable providence sometimes attended the efforts of the Preachers to introduce the Gospel into those fastnesses. About the year 1768, John Smith, a zealous Preacher, who had been himself reclaimed from great wickedness, was *pressed in spirit* to go, and preach at Glenarm, a small place surrounded with mountains, on the sea-shore, opposite the North of Scotland. Near this town he overtook a young lady, riding behind a servant; and on her saying it was a very wicked place, he asked, "Are there no good men there?" She said, "Yes, there is one William Hunter." He rode into the town, and inquired for William Hunter's house. When he came to the door, a young woman was sweeping the house. He asked her name; and being answered, "Betty Hunter," alighted, and said, "Betty, take my horse to an inn, and tell every one you meet, A gentleman at our house has good news to tell you at seven o'clock." At seven the house was well filled. John preached to them twice a-day, for nine days. A Society was then formed, which continues to this day. When he took his leave, he had only three-pence: however, he asked the landlady, " What am I to pay for my horse?" " Nothing, Sir," said the woman: " a gentleman has paid all: and will do so, if you stay a month."

At other times, they suffered severely in those attempts. Very shortly after the above event, Mr. John M'Burney, another Preacher, was invited to preach at a Mr. Perry's, within a few miles of Enniskillen. He accordingly went thither. In the evening, while the congregation was singing a hymn, a large mob beset the house. Six of these rushed in, armed with clubs, and immediately fell upon the people. But many of them joining together, thrust the rioters out, and shut and fastened the door. On this, they broke every pane of glass in the windows, and threw in a large quantity of stones. They then broke into the house through a weak part of the wall, and hauling out both men and women, beat them without mercy. Soon after, they dragged out Mr. M'Burney, whom they instantly knocked down. They continued beating him on the head and breast, while he lay senseless on the ground. Yet, after a while, coming a little to himself, he got up; but not being quite sensible, staggered, and fell again. Then one of them set his foot upon his face, swearing, " he would tread the Holy Ghost out of him." Another ran his stick into his mouth. As soon as he could speak, he said, " May God forgive you; I do." They then set him on his horse, and one of the ruffians got up behind him, and forced him to gallop down the rocky mountain to the town. There they kept him, till a gentleman took him out of their hands, and entertained and lodged him in the most hospitable manner. But his bruises, on the head and breast in particular, would not suffer him to sleep. After lingering a few years, he died at Clones, in consequence of this treatment. He preached almost to the last week of his life, and went to his reward, rejoicing in God his Saviour.

A few months after this good man had been thus severely treated, a furious mob way-laid Mr. Wesley, within a few miles of the same place. One of his horses wanting a shoe, he went forward to Enniskillen, accompanied by two friends. The mob in the mean time attacked the chaise, beat in the pannels with stones, and almost covered it with dirt and mortar. When he entered the town, a large party encountered him: but many soldiers in the street, accosting him respectfully, the mob shrunk back, and he passed through unhurt.

The most dangerous illness which Mr. Wesley ever had, previous to that which removed him to a better world, was in this kingdom, in the summer of 1775.

It is worthy of note, that during the extremity of his illness, while many thousands in the three kingdoms were praying for his recovery, two of the Preachers, one near the place where he lay, the other in the county of Kent, in England, while praying for him, had those words, spoken originally of Hezekiah, (Isaiah xxxviii. 5,) impressed upon their minds with remarkable force, "I will add unto his days fifteen years." After this, he lived fifteen years and a few months.

In the year 1783, that blessed man, the late Rev. Mr. Fletcher visited Dublin. He was, indeed, one of

"The heav'n-born race of Priests and Kings."

His preaching was (to use St. Peter's words,) " with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." His conversation was that of a Seraph. And his whole life was such a living picture of the truths he taught, that his name is still among that people as ointment poured forth. A revival began under his ministry, which has lasted to this day. The Preachers who succeeded, as well as those who were cotemporary with him, were lively, zealous men, and strict in discipline. The consequence was, that the Society increased, till it became double what it ever was before; and many experienced the glorious liberty of the children of God. Mr. Wesley greatly rejoiced over them in his two last visits to Ireland; and often declared that he found a rest in that city, which he never did before. Indeed, the whole kingdom began to pronounce him blessed. Many Clergymen, some of whom were eminent in the literary world, invited him to their houses and churches, and seemed to look upon themselves as honoured by his company. The general voice appeared to be, " He hath done all things well!"

Great cause, indeed, had he to rejoice in the success of his labours. He saw religion prosper, and hold on its happy course throughout the land. He sat in his circle of friends, who were as his own soul, in the last Conference which he held in Dublin, and delightfully called to mind the former days. He might say, on this occasion also,

> " O the fathomless love,
> That has deign'd to approve
> And prosper the work of my hands!

With my pastoral crook
I went over the brook,
And behold! I am spread into bands!"

"I had much satisfaction," says he, "in this Conference; in which, conversing with between forty and fifty travelling Preachers, I found such a body of men, as I hardly believed could have been brought together in Ireland: men of so sound experience, so deep piety, and so strong understanding, that I am convinced, they are no way inferior to the English Conference, except it be in number."

A few days after this, (in July 1789,) he took a solemn farewel of these his sons in the Gospel, expecting to see them no more, till they should meet in the Paradise of God.

The number of Itinerant Preachers, in the Methodist Connection, now in Ireland, is about one hundred and twenty, besides some hundreds of Local Preachers, who follow their employments, during the week, and exhort or preach in the towns and villages, once, twice, or three times, on the Lord's days. And there were upwards of twenty-eight thousand in the Societies, in that country, at the last annual Conference, held July, 1811.

The Preachers, in connection with the late Rev. Mr. Wesley, have been endeavouring, for fifty years, to get access to the native Irish; but with little or no success, till lately. Their ignorance of the Irish language was an insuperable obstacle in their way. But, since the late rebellion, that hinderance has been removed. Several Preachers have been raised up, who preach in the Irish language. They all are men of unblemished characters, and genuine piety.

They

They travel, two and two, throughout Ireland, preach in summer and winter on horseback, in the fairs and markets, in all kinds of weather, as well as in places of worship, and in private houses; and are protected by the magistracy of the land. Hitherto their labours have been attended with much apparent success. Vast multitudes of the Catholics have attended their ministry, in different parts of the country, with manifest seriousness and concern. Frequently thousands have been bathed in tears, while attending to the word preached: and many hundreds have already shewn by their conduct, that they are truly reformed in heart and life. The Missionaries, who labour night and day, and with the greatest cheerfulness expose themselves to all manner of hardships, are unwearied in their work, and fully determined to proceed in it. We may therefore hope that God is now visiting that most wretched people, and that many of them will not only be brought over from Popery to Protestantism; but, which is of infinitely greater consequence, from the *power of Satan, unto God.* For a fuller account of these Missions, the reader is referred to a small Pamphlet published on the subject by Dr. Coke, consisting chiefly of "Copies of Letters from the Missionaries," to himself, in which they relate, at large, the efforts they have used to spread the Gospel among that benighted people, the reception they have met with in different places, and the very manifest success that has attended their labours.

It is justly observed, by the Doctor, that this Mission to the native Irish is of great importance, even in a political point of view, and that to the whole Empire. If it continue to be successful, as it promises, it will effectually eradicate the seeds of rebellion and confusion, and will do more to establish subordination to lawful authority, tranquillity, and peace, than the wisest laws and regulations can effect, while ignorance and vice possess the hearts and lives of the inhabitants. The salvation of men's souls, however, is principally to be considered; and who, that believes the truth of Christianity, but must rejoice at such a prospect of helping forward the design on which the Son of God came into the world, by seeking and saving so many that to all appearance were lost.

SECTION XIV.

OF THE SUCCESS OF MR. WESLEY AND HIS HELPERS IN SCOTLAND, THE ISLE OF MAN, AND THE ISLANDS IN THE ENGLISH CHANNEL.

THE favourable light in which Mr. Wesley was viewed by some of the Ministers in Scotland, has already been noticed. In the spring of the year 1751, being invited by Colonel Galatin, then in quarters at Musselborough, near Edinburgh, he formed the design of visiting Scotland. Mr. Wesley having mentioned this to Mr. Whitefield, he replied, "You have no business there: for your principles are so well known, that if you spoke like an angel, none would hear you. And if they did, you would have nothing to do, but to *dispute* with one and another from morning to night." He answered, "If God send me, people will hear. And I will give them no provocation to dispute: for I will studiously avoid controverted points, and keep to the fundamental truths of Christianity. And if any still begin to dispute, they may: but I will not dispute with them."

He went. Hundreds and thousands flocked to hear: and he was enabled to keep his word. He avoided whatever might engender strife, and insisted upon the grand points, the religion of the heart, and salvation by faith, at all times, and in all places. And by this means, he cut off all occasion of dispute.

At Musselborough, especially, he was kindly received. Whereas, in the kirk, (as Mrs. Galatin informed him,) there used to be laughing and talking, and all the marks of the grossest inattention: it was far otherwise in the school-room, where he preached. The people remained as statues from the beginning of the sermon to the end. He used great plainness of speech toward them; and they all received it in love: so that the prejudice which had been growing for several years, was torn up by the roots in one hour. After preaching, one of the bailiffs of the town, with one of the elders of the kirk, came to him, and begged he would stay with them a while, if it were but two or three days, and they would fit up a far larger place than the school, and prepare seats for the congregation. But his time was fixed All, therefore, he could now do, was to give them a promise that Mr. Hopper should come back the next week, and spend a few days with them. Mr. Hopper did accordingly return, at the time appointed, and preached morning and evening to large congregations, who heard with the greatest attention.

In April, 1753, Mr. Wesley again visited Scotland. He now entered it on the side of Dumfries.

When he arrived at Glasgow, that excellent man, Dr. Gillies, received him in a truly Christian spirit; and invited him to preach in his church. Upon this Mr. Wesley remarks, "Surely with God nothing is impossible! Who would have believed, five and twenty years ago, either that the minister would have desired it, or that I should have consented to preach in a Scotch Kirk!" He preached also at the prison: and then returned by Edinburgh and Tranent to England. Not long after, Mr. Wardrobe, Minister of Bathgate in Scotland, the twin-soul of Dr. Gillies, preached at Mr. Wesley's Chapel in Newcastle, to the no small amazement and displeasure of some of his zealous countrymen.

The Lord was pleased, in Scotland also, to *choose the foolish things of the world* to carry on his work. Not only such men as Dr. Gillies, Mr. Wardrobe, and Mr. Wesley, but sometimes soldiers in quarters, or tradesmen who went thither to get employment, were the instruments of turning many to God, who had before sought death in the error of their ways.

The first Societies were those of Musselborough and Dunbar: many of whom, at his next visit, could rejoice in God their Saviour. During this tour, he preached in the open air in every place, and remarks, that he was agreeably surprised at the simplicity and teachableness of many who attended his ministry. *Steadiness*, indeed, he looked for in the people of North Britain: and he rejoiced to find also those other pleasing qualities in many.

He visited Scotland again in 1761, and found the labours of the Preachers were not in vain. Mr. Hopper met him at Edinburgh, where the preaching was now well attended. From thence he went to

Dundee and Aberdeen. At the latter place he was treated with much respect by the Principal, and other eminent persons of the University. He preached first in the College Close, and then in the Hall, which was crowded even at five in the morning. In every place some desired to unite with him, (according to the rule,) to meet together weekly, to "provoke each other to love and to good works."

The work of God now prospered much. Many were brought to the knowledge and love of God by the preaching of Mr. Roberts and Mr. Hanby, at Edinburgh, Dundee, and Aberdeen.

And soon after, Mr. Taylor visited Glasgow, and for several weeks together preached in the open air. As the winter came on, his difficulties were great. But being determined fully to deliver his soul, he sold his horse, and, while he thus supported himself, he continued daily to testify, "Repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." At length he saw fruit of his labour. Some turned to God, and acknowledged his messenger. A place was then provided for him to preach in, and the little Society was soon increased to seventy persons.

The Preachers now penetrated into the Highlands: and at his next visit Mr. Wesley preached at Inverness. All in this place seemed to hear him gladly, and a Society was afterwards formed, which continues to this day. On his return to Edinburgh, finding it was the time of celebrating the Lord's supper, he laid aside his last portion of bigotry, and partook of this holy ordinance at the West-Kirk.

In 1769, and the following years, the Preachers laboured much among the Highlanders. Mr. M'Nabb began, and was followed by Mr. Duncan Wright.

And their labours were attended with success. In the years 1770, and 1771, many were converted to God. After having made a considerable proficiency in the Erse language, Mr. Wright usually preached to them three times a-day in different places, besides once in the street. "Though by this means," says he, "I had many an aching head and pained breast, yet it was delightful to see hundreds of them attending, with streaming eyes, and attention still as night: or to hear them, in their simple way, singing the praises of God in their own tongue. If ever God said to my heart, 'Go, and I will be with thee,' it was then. I extol the name of my adorable Master, that my labours were not in vain. How gladly would I have spent my life with these dear souls! But my health would not permit it." At Mr. Wesley's next visit, the Magistrates of Perth and Arbroath presented him with the freedom of their respective cities.

In the following years, the few Ministers who treated him with respect, and rejoiced in his labours, being taken to a better world, he felt the different spirit of those who succeeded. While some, even of the nobility, and many of the gentry, of that kingdom, honourably received him, he thus remarks concerning Inverness; "I find a new face of things here. Good Mr. Mackenzie has been for some years removed to Abraham's bosom. Mr. Frazer, his colleague, a pious man, of the old stamp, is likewise gone to rest. The three present Ministers are of another kind; so that I have no more place in the Kirk." Others were not content with this, but spoke all manner of evil concerning him, faithfully retailing all the slander which the Antinomians of England spoke or published of him from time to time. Some refused to administer the Lord's supper to the members of his Societies, or even to baptize their children. They even made Mr. Wesley's liberality of sentiment, his desire to promote religion without forming a distinct church, an argument against him; insisting that the Methodists, so called, were not, and could not be, a church of Christ, because they had not the sacraments among them: and this latter argument, especially, had no small influence in diminishing his Societies, and obstructing the progress of the work.

The great and pious Mr. Baxter observes, that nations change their religious sentiments, as they do their common customs and manners; and wonders that this should be found even among the Ministers of God. Whatever worldly Ministers do, *they* are steadfast and unmoveable. They speak as the oracles of God, and turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left. Scotland, it is certain, like Geneva, has, since the Reformation, ran from high Calvinism, to almost as high Arianism or Socinianism: the exceptions, especially in the cities, are but few. And who can stem the torrent? Only those who know experimentally the *Truth as it is in Jesus.* A few of these, Mr. Wesley has been, under God, the happy instrument of introducing into that kingdom: and many hear their word, and find it to be "the power of God unto salvation." These, we trust, will not be as reeds shaken with the wind. As they imitate the angels of God in worshipping Christ, as "God over all, blessed for ever;" so they declare that "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Here then, we may hope, will the proud waves of worldly religion be stayed: until God calls that once highly-favoured nation to return unto him, to "worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

The Isle of Man is supposed to derive its name from the Saxon word Mang, which signifies *among;* because, lying in St. George's Channel, it is almost at an equal distance from the kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland. It is about thirty miles in length, and twelve in breadth.

In 1774, a Mr. Lowry removed from this Isle to Liverpool. He then lived according to the course of this world. But happening to hear some of the Preachers in connection with Mr. Wesley, he was awakened; and turning to God, he soon found redemption through Christ, the forgiveness of his sins. Immediately he began to mourn over his native Isle, which he now saw lying in darkness: and under this concern of mind, applied to Mr. John Crook, a zealous man, at that time a Local Preacher, who readily undertook to visit the Island.

Mr. Crook went thither in the month of March, 1775. On Sunday morning the 11th, he preached his first sermon, in the Court-house, at Douglas. The congregation was small; but in the evening he was obliged to preach abroad, on account of the multitude that came together.

On Wednesday he went to Castletown, where he found the same gracious Providence directing his way. A Mr. Brooks from Bristol, who had heard him on the Sunday, procured a place for him, which was formerly used as a Ball-room; and gave notice to all the people, so that he had a large and attentive congregation. The next evening such a multitude came together, that he was obliged to preach in the open air by candle-light. A servant belonging to the Governor was then convinced of the truth, and from that time behaved in the most friendly manner. The next Lord's-day, the Lieutenant-Governor, and the Minister of Castletown, were among his hearers.

In the week following he visited Peeltown, where he abode three weeks, preaching to large congregations. At this place he was greatly encouraged. His hearers were chiefly the poor, and most of them fishermen. They received the word with all readiness of mind, and when he departed, they followed him with tears and blessings.

He then returned to Liverpool, his business not permitting his longer absence. On his second visit, he found many were still willing to hear: but there were also many opposers. Most of the rich, who heard at the beginning, now withdrew themselves from so plain a Preacher. The reports, usual on such occasions, were now propagated concerning him, that he preached new doctrines, and was an enemy to works. To shew the falsehood of the first report, he read the Homilies of the Church of England in every place. This was attended with much good. But the rabble, being no longer awed by the presence of the richer inhabitants, frequently disturbed and interrupted him in the rudest manner. A paper also was put up at the Quay, warning the people against "the hypocritical field-preacher, who had lately crept in among them to subvert the church of Christ;" to which were added, some curious anecdotes.

A wicked man was encouraged by these circumstances, to assault him at Douglas, and in other respects to use him in a very improper manner: but riding home drunk through the town of Bella Salla, this unhappy man was thrown from his horse, and killed on the spot.

At Peel, an old warehouse was procured for him to preach in; but in the midst of the sermon, the beam which supported the loft gave way, and the floor sunk several feet. Mr. Crook cried out, he knew not why, "Fear not. God will help us. You shall not be hurt." And so it was. The beam rested on a hogshead which was on the ground-floor, and sunk no farther.

A few in Castletown, and a much greater number in Peel, now agreed to unite together, and form a Society, having had the Rules explained to them. Mr. Crook saw fruit of his labour, and took charge of those with joy, watching over them, and exhorting them to "adorn the Gospel of God their Saviour in all things."

The Island was soon after joined to the Whitehaven circuit, and visited regularly by the Preachers, and the Lord also now gave them additional help. First one, and then several persons, were raised up among themselves, who, with the approbation of the Superintendant, exhorted and preached both in the Manks language and in English, to the edification and comfort of their hearers. The Rev. Edward Smyth, who at that time resided in the North of Ireland, paid them a visit about this time, and his labours were profitable to many. Before he left the island, Mr. Wesley arrived, May 30, 1777; and was received with great respect by all the people. Mr. Wood, the Governor, who had been very friendly, was a little before taken to a better world. Mrs. Wood invited Mr. Wesley to her house, and seemed to think herself honoured by his company. Some of the Clergy also politely visited him: but they could not invite him to their pulpits, as *the Bishop had forbidden it*. He preached throughout the island, in the houses, the church-yards, and the market-places, and was heard with great attention by immense multitudes.

At his next visit he observes, "Having now visited the Island round, East, South, North, and West, I was thoroughly convinced that we have no such circuit as this, either in England, Scotland, or Ireland. The natives are a plain, artless, simple people; unpolished, that is, unpolluted: few of them are rich or genteel; the far greater part moderately poor. And most of the strangers that settle among them, are men that have seen affliction. The Local Preachers, twenty-two in number, are men of faith and love, knit together in one mind, and one judgment. They speak either Manks or English, and follow a regular plan, which the Superintendant gives them monthly.

"The Isle is supposed to have thirty thousand inhabitants. Allowing half of them to be adults, and our Societies to contain one or two and twenty hundred members, what a fair proportion is this! What has been seen like this, in any part either of Great Britain, or Ireland?"

I must now mention a work, small at present, but likely to be of the greatest magnitude in its consequences. In the countries we have hitherto considered, (the Isle of Man excepted,) the English language has been universally spoken. But Divine Providence led Mr. Wesley, with the Preachers in connection with him, into an unexpected line of usefulness.

The Islands of Jersey, Guernsey, and Alderney, are situated in St. Michael's Bay, near the Coast of Normandy. They are the only remains of the Norman dominions, annexed to Great Britain by William the Conqueror. The inhabitants in general, (those of the two principal towns excepted,) speak only French.

Jersey was known to the ancient Romans under the name of Cæsarea. It is twelve miles in length, and contains about twenty thousand inhabitants. Guernsey is seven or eight miles long, and contains about fifteen thousand people. These two islands are exceedingly fertile and healthy. Alderney is about eight miles in circumference, and has about three or four thousand inhabitants.

In a regiment of soldiers, which was sent over to Jersey in the late war, there were a few serious Christians, who had heard the gospel in one of the seaport towns of England. These men finding no help for their souls in the Island, wrote to Mr. Wesley, entreating him to send them a Preacher. Mr. Brackenbury, a gentleman of fortune in Lincolnshire, who had joined the Society, and soon afterwards preached in connection with Mr. Wesley, was present when the letter was received, and offered his service, as he had some acquaintance with the French language. Mr. Wesley readily accepted the offer. Mr. Brackenbury set off for Jersey, rented a house in the town of St. Helier, preached the gospel through the Island, and was the means of turning many from their sins to God. At first his religious assemblies were greatly disturbed, particularly in the parish of St. Mary, by a miserable set of ungodly men, who, on an appeal to the civil Magistrate, were fined, and obliged to give security for their good behaviour.

In the year 1786, Mr. Wesley sent another Preacher, Mr. Adam Clarke, to the Island of Jersey. Mr. Clarke preached several times in the town of St. Aubin, surrounded by a very violent mob, from whom he received much abuse; and was often in danger of losing his life. The rioters tore the house, in which he preached, almost to pieces. At another time, one of the Magistrates headed a large mob, and pulled down Mr. Clarke from the pulpit with his own hands. The drummer of the St. Aubin Militia was then called, who had the honour of beating the Minister of God, and afterwards of drumming him through, and out of the town. Mr. Clarke, however, was not to be intimidated by the usage he met with, but continued his visits and labours, till he at last outweathered the storm. Regular preaching was then established in the town, and even the mob themselves reverenced the Preacher.

From this time, religion flourished more and more in the Island of Jersey. Many Preachers were raised among the natives, and Societies formed all over the Island.

In the course of these events, a shop-keeper of the Island of Guernsey, whose name was Arrive, visited Jersey, and under the preaching of Mr. Brackenbury was brought to repentance. He then invited Mr. Brackenbury to visit Guernsey. He went, and was universally well received. Many of the gentry opened their houses to him, and permitted him to preach in their parlours. Dr. Coke, who about this time visited these Islands, followed Mr. Brackenbury in Guernsey, and formed the first Society in that Island. Afterwards, Mr. Clarke, with much pain and difficulty, accompanied by many remarkable providences, erected a very commodious Chapel in the town of St. Peter, in which a large congregation regularly attended.

Mr. De Queteville, a native of Jersey, was also very useful in the Island of Guernsey, particularly in the country parts, where the French language alone is spoken. But he endured great persecutions. The most horrid things were laid to his charge. A prosecution was carried on against him in the supreme Court, with the design of procuring a sentence of banishment. But the very witnesses who were employed to swear the falsest things against him, and most probably intended it when they first appeared before the Court, were yet strangely constrained to give the most pointed evidence in his favour: which entirely counteracted all the designs of his enemies.

In the beginning of the year 1787, Mr. Clarke visited the Isle of Alderney. When he arrived, he knew not where to go: he had no acquaintance in the Island, nor had any person invited him thither. For some time he was perplexed in reasoning on his situation, till that word of the God of Missionaries powerfully impressed his mind; "Into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house,—and in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give," Luke x. 5—7.

On this, he took courage, and proceeded to the town, which is about a mile distant from the harbour. After having walked some way into it, he took particular notice of a very poor cottage, into which he found a strong inclination to enter. He did so, with a "Peace be to this house!" and found in it an old man and woman, who, understanding his business, bade him "welcome to the best food they had, to a little chamber where he might sleep, and (what was still more acceptable,) to their house to preach in." He now saw clearly the hand of Providence in his favour, and was much encouraged.

Being unwilling to lose any time, he told them he would preach that evening, if they could convene a congregation. The strange news spread rapidly through the town; and long before the appointed hour, a multitude of people flocked together, to whom he spoke *of the kingdom of God*, nearly as long as the little strength he had, after the fatigues of his voyage, remained. When he had concluded, it was with much difficulty he could persuade them to depart, after promising to preach to them again the next evening. He then retired to his little apartment, where he had not rested twenty minutes, when the good woman of the house came and entreated him to preach again, as several of the gentry, (among whom was one of the Justices,) were come to hear what he had to say.

He went down immediately, and found the house once more full. Deep attention sat on every face, while he shewed the great need they stood in of a Saviour, and exhorted them to turn immediately from all their iniquities to the living God. He continued in this good work about an hour, and concluded with informing them what his design was in visiting their island, and the motives that induced him thereto.

Having ended, the Justice stepped forward, exchanged a few very civil words with him, and desired to see the book out of which he had been speaking. He handed his Bible to him. The Justice looked at it with attention, and returned it with apparent satisfaction. The congregation then departed: and the concern evident on many of their countenances, fully proved, that God had added *his* testimony to that of his servant.

The next evening he preached again to a large, attentive company. But a singular circumstance happened the following day. While he was at dinner, a constable came from a person in authority, to solicit his immediate appearance at a place called the Bray, (where several reputable families dwell, and where the Governor's stores are kept,) to preach to a company of gentlemen and ladies, who were waiting, and at whose desire one of the large storerooms was prepared for the purpose. He immediately went, and in a quarter of an hour after his arrival, a large company was assembled. The gentry were not so partial to themselves, as to exclude the sailors, smugglers, or labourers. All heard with deep attention, except an English gentleman, so called, who perhaps meant to shew the Islanders that *he* despised sacred things.

The next Lord's day, in the evening, he preached again in the same place, to a much larger congregation, composed of the principal gentry of the Island. The day following, being the time appointed for his return, many were unwilling he should leave them, saying, "We have much need of such preaching, and such a Preacher: we wish you would abide in the Island, and go back no more." However, the vessel being aground, he was detained till the next morning, to the great joy of his new friends, when, after a tender parting, he left the Island.

After this, the native Preachers, raised up in Jersey and Guernsey, visited this little Island: and, by their means, a Chapel has been erected, a large Society formed, and many souls brought to an acquaintance with God.

August 6, 1787, Mr. Wesley, being now eighty-four years of age, with Dr. Coke and Mr. Bradford, set off from the Manchester Conference, to visit the Islands in the English Channel. Being prevented by contrary winds from reaching the Isle of Guernsey, they sailed for Alderney, where they arrived on the 14th.

At eight the next morning, Mr. Wesley preached on the Beach, near the place where he lodged; and, before his hymn was ended, had a tolerable congregation. Soon after he had concluded, the Governor of the Island waited upon him with very great courtesey. After which, he with his company, sailed for Guernsey.

On his arrival, he went into the country, to the house of Mr. De Jersey, a gentleman of fortune, where he preached at five the following morning, in a large room, to a very serious congregation; and in the evening to a crowded audience, in the Preaching-house, in the town of St. Peter. On the 18th, he and Dr. Coke dined with the Governor, who studied to shew him every mark of civility. On the 20th, he set sail for the Isle of Jersey: Mr. Brackenbury received him on his arrival, and in his house he frequently preached to exceedingly serious congregations. "Even the gentry," observes Mr.

Wesley, speaking of his visit to this Island, "heard with deep attention. What little things does God use to advance his own glory! Probably," continues he, "many of these flock together, because I have lived so many years! And perhaps even this may be the means of *their* living for ever!" In the country he preached in English, Mr. Brackenbury interpreting sentence by sentence: and even in this inconvenient way of speaking, God owned his word. Being detained a considerable time by contrary winds, the Assembly-room was offered him, in which he preached to very large congregations, and to the profit of many.

Hardly a gentleman or lady in the town of St. Peter, omitted a single opportunity of attending his ministry. So universal and steady an attendance of the rich and the gay he never before experienced. During this visit, he was favoured with singular powers of elocution; and delivered a series of discourses, peculiarly suited to his hearers. On the 6th, a ship sailed for Mount Bay, in Cornwall; and, the wind not permitting him to sail for Southampton, he took his passage in it, and on the next day landed at Penzance.

There is now a surplus of native Preachers in the Islands in the English Channel, two of whom had visited France before the war, and formed some small Societies near Caen, in Normandy. Whether any fruit will arise, time will shew.

SECTION XV.

OF THE ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF THE METHODISTS IN AMERICA, AND THE WEST INDIA ISLANDS.

IN 1729, the Lord raised up that eminent man, Dr. Jonathan Edwards, in New England. In his time, religion flourished in that Province. A very brief account of this revival I shall give in his own words.

" In the town of Northampton, in New England, after a more than ordinary licentiousness in the people, a concern for religion began to revive in 1729, but more observedly in 1733; when there was a general reformation of outward disorders, which has continued ever since.

" About this time I began to preach concerning *Justification by Faith alone.* This was attended with a very remarkable blessing. Then it was, that the Spirit of God began wonderfully to work among us. A great and earnest concern about the things of God ran through all parts of the town. All talk but of eternal things was laid aside. The conversation in all companies, (unless so far as was necessary for the carrying on of worldly business,) was wholly upon religion. Hence there soon appeared a glorious alteration, so that in 1735, the town seemed to be full of the presence of God. There were remarkable tokens of God's presence almost in every house: parents rejoicing over their children as new-born, husbands over their wives, and wives over their husbands."

He proceeds to describe the amazing spread of that work in New England; and then adds: " This shower of divine blessings has been yet more extensive. There was no small degree of it in some parts of the Jerseys. God has also seemed to go out of his usual way in the quickness of his work. It is wonderful that persons should be so suddenly, and yet so greatly changed. Many have been taken from a loose and careless way of living, and seized with strong convictions of their guilt and misery; and in a very little time old things have passed away, and all things have become new with them."

There were many also in New England, and among the Indians, truly converted to God, by those eminent and laborious Ministers, Mr. Elliott, and Mr. Brainerd.

In 1739, Mr. George Whitefield made his second visit to America; and the Spirit of the Most High did indeed rest upon that great man. He revived that pure religion, which was so remarkable in the time of Dr. Edwards, but after his death, had decayed. Great was his zeal, and great his success. "God spoke the word, and great was the company of the Preachers." The zealous Ministers, raised by his labours, who were distinguished by the denomination of *New Lights*, became the most numerous body in New England: and, strange as it may appear, the old, wise, literary body of Presbyterians, in a synod held among themselves, formally thrust out or excommunicated *the majority;* declaring, they would have no ministerial union with such an illiterate body of men. But the *real* Ministers of God were not to be silenced by such means. However, this revival also was but of short duration. Formality on the one hand, and Antinomianism on the other, again recovered their ascendency.

During the space of about thirty years, viz. from 1760 to 1790, several persons, members of Mr. Wesley's Society, emigrated from England and Ireland, and settled in various parts of America. About the year 1768, Philip Embury, a Local Preacher from Ireland, began to preach in the city of New-York, and formed a Society of his own countrymen and the citizens. About the same time, Robert Strawbridge, another Local Preacher from Ireland, settled in Frederic-county in Maryland, and preaching there, formed some Societies. About this period also, Mr. Webb, a Lieutenant in the Army, preached at New-York and Philadelphia, with great success; and, with the assistance of his friends, erected a Chapel in New-York, which was the first Chapel in Mr. Wesley's connection, in America. Induced by the success he met with, and by an earnest desire of saving souls, he wrote a letter to Mr. Wesley, earnestly importuning him to send Missionaries to that Continent. Accordingly, Mr. Wesley nominated Mr. Richard Boardman, and Mr. Joseph Pilmoor, as Missionaries for America, who landed at Philadelphia, in 1769, and were the first Itinerant Preachers, in connection with Mr. Wesley, on that Continent. A few days after their landing, Mr. Pilmoor wrote a letter to Mr. Wesley, of which the following is an extract:

"Philadelphia, Oct. 31, 1769.

"Reverend Sir,

"By the blessing of God, we are safe arrived here, after a tedious passage of nine weeks.

"We were not a little surprised to find Captain Webb in town, and a Society of about a hundred members, who desire to be in close connection with you. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.

"I have preached several times, and the people flock to hear in multitudes. Sunday evening, I went out upon the Common. I had the stage, appointed for the horse-race, for my pulpit; and I think between four and five thousand hearers, who heard with attention still as night. Blessed be God for field-preaching! When I began to talk of preaching at five o'clock in the morning, the people thought it would not answer in America: however, I resolved to try, and had a very good congregation.

"Here seems to be a great and effectual door opening in this country, and I hope many souls will be gathered in. The people in general like to hear the word, and seem to have some idea of salvation by grace."

Mr. Boardman observes, in a letter to Mr. Wesley, from New-York, dated April 24, 1770, "Our house contains about seventeen hundred hearers. About a third part of those, who attend the preaching, get in; the rest are glad to hear without. There appears such a willingness in the Americans to hear the word, as I never saw before. They have no preaching in some parts of the back Settlements. I doubt not but an effectual door will be opened among them. O may the Most High now give his Son the Heathen for his inheritance! The number of Blacks, that attend the preaching, affects me much."

Mr. Pilmoor visited Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina. and preached in those States with considerable success.

About the latter end of the year 1771, Mr. Wesley sent over Mr. Francis Asbury and Mr. Richard Wright to the assistance of the former Missionaries. Mr. Asbury was then, as he has been ever since, indefatigable in his labours. He stayed not long in the cities. Most of his time he spent in the villages and plantations, forming Societies in many places. He frequently complains in his Journal, which was published in America, that his brethren were too fond of the cities; and justly observes, that no extensive work could be carried on in America, unless the Preachers devoted more of their time to the plantations; the cities and towns being very few, and a great majority of the inhabitants being settled in the interior parts of the country.

In 1773, Mr. Wesley sent over Mr. Thomas Rankin, and Mr. George Shadford. They laboured for near five years on that Continent, travelling through all the States between New-York and North Carolina inclusive, forming Societies and preaching the Gospel with great success.

" At our first little Conference in Philadelphia, July, 1773," observes Mr. Rankin in his own printed account, " we had about a thousand in the different Societies, and six or seven Preachers: and in May, 1777, we had forty Preachers in the different Circuits, and about seven thousand members in the Societies; besides many hundreds of Negroes, who were convinced of sin, and many of them happy in the love of God. Had it not been for the Civil War, I have reason to believe the work of God would have flourished in a more abundant manner, as both rich and poor gladly embraced the truths of the Gospel, and received the Preachers with open arms."

I shall give a short account of one of the revivals in Virginia, at this period, which may, in some degree, be considered as a specimen of them all.

In 1770 and 1771, there was a considerable outpouring of the Spirit of God at a place called White-Oak. In the year 1772, the revival was more considerable, and extended itself, in some places, for fifty or sixty miles round. It increased still more in the following year. In the spring of 1774, it was more remarkable than ever. Tears fell plentifully from the eyes of the hearers, and many were much affected under the word. In the latter end of the year 1775, there was as great a revival of religion, as perhaps was ever known in country places, in so short a time: but it became still more considerable in January, 1776. Mr. Shadford then preached in Virginia: and while the ears of the people were opened by novelty, God sent his word home to their hearts. Many sinners were powerfully convinced, and, Mercy! mercy! was their cry. Conversions were frequent; and the people of God were inspired with new life and vigour, by the happiness of others; and entreated God, with strong cries and tears, so to "circumcise their hearts," that they might "love him with all their hearts," and serve him with all their strength.

Numbers of old and grey-headed, and of middle-aged persons, of youth, yea, of little children, were the subjects of this work. There were instances of the latter, of eight or nine years old. Some of the children were exceeding happy in the love of God; and spoke of the whole process of the work of God, of their convictions, the time when, and the manner how they obtained deliverance, with such clearness as might convince an Atheist, that this was indeed the work of God.

This outpouring of the Spirit so extended itself, that it soon took in a circumference of between four and five hundred miles, including fourteen counties in Virginia, and two in North Carolina.

At one meeting, held in Boisseau's Chapel, the windows of heaven were opened as it were, and the rain of a Divine Influence was abundantly poured down. At the Love-feast then held, it seemed as if the whole house was filled with the presence of God. A flame kindled, and ran from heart to heart. Many were deeply convinced of sin; many mourners were filled with consolation; and many believers were so overwhelmed with love, that they could not doubt but God had enabled them to love him with *all* their hearts.

The multitudes that attended on these occasions, returned home all alive to God, and spread the flame through their respective neighbourhoods, which ran from family to family. So that, within four weeks, several found the peace of God. And scarce any conversation was to be heard, but concerning the things of God. The unhappy disputes between England and her Colonies, had, till this time, engrossed the conversation of all the people, but seemed now in most companies to be forgotten, while things of far greater importance lay so near their hearts. In many large companies one careless person could not be seen; and the far greater part seemed happy in a clear sense of the love of God.

It may be necessary to observe here, that we do not judge of conversions chiefly by those high-raised affections, which God gives from time to time, according to the counsel of his own will, perhaps, among other reasons, to alarm a drowsy world: and instances of which we find in the holy Scriptures, as well as in accounts transmitted down to us in all ages, and in all nations of Christendom, since the establishment of Christianity; but by the *consequent fruits*, by a holy life and conversation, by every heavenly temper, breathing forth through all the relative duties of life, and in all the words and actions of the man.

At this time, a great work of divine grace was certainly wrought: and it was evident beyond all contradiction, that many open and profligate sinners, of all sorts, were effectually and lastingly changed into pious, uniform christians.

When the Civil War became general in that country, Mr. Rankin, with other Preachers, from England, who had spoken publickly in behalf of the British Cause, were obliged to flee for their lives. And of all the European Missionaries, Mr. Francis Asbury alone was determined to bear the heat and burden of that day. Though he had preserved a perfect neutrality, and had spoke nothing in public or private on the merits of the war, yet he was obliged, from the suspicions already raised against the Societies, to conceal himself for two years in the county of Kent in Delaware, at the house of a Mr. White, a Justice of the Peace, and a member of the Society. In the house of this gentleman, he held two Conferences with all the Preachers he could collect in the midst of the troubles. But a gentleman of Delaware, who became a very celebrated character, by his publications, entitled, "The Farmer's Letters,"

Letters," John Dickenson, Esq. predecessor to Dr. Franklin in the government of Pennsylvania, with great candour gave him a strong letter of recommendation; by virtue of which, he ventured and continued to travel through the States without any molestation.

Many of the Preachers, that were dubious concerning the merit of the war, and therefore scrupled to take the oaths of allegiance to the States in which they respectively laboured, were fined or imprisoned. But in every instance, those who were confined soon found some powerful friend; yea, often one who had no connection with the Society, who used his influence with the Governor and Council of the State, and obtained their liberty. The assembly of Maryland, partly perhaps to deliver the Judges from the trouble which was given them, and partly out of a spirit of candour, passed an Act, expressly to allow the Methodist Preachers, so called, to exercise their function without taking the oath of allegiance.

Some time before this, a remarkable occurrence happened in a county in Maryland. Mr. Chew, one of the Preachers, was brought before Mr. Downs, then Sheriff of the county, and afterwards a member of the General Assembly of the State. The Sheriff demanded, whether he was a Minister of the Gospel. On receiving from Mr. Chew an answer in the affirmative, he required him to take the oath of allegiance. Mr. Chew answered him, that he had scruples on his mind, and therefore could not consent at present. Mr. Downs informed him, that he was bound on oath to execute the laws, and must in such case commit him to prison. Mr. Chew calmly replied, that he by no means wished to be the cause of perjury, and therefore was perfectly resigned to suffer the penalty incurred. "You are a strange man," cried the Sheriff, "and I cannot bear to punish you. I will therefore make my own house your prison." He accordingly committed him under his hand and seal, and kept him in his own house for three months, during which time the Sheriff was awakened and his lady converted. They soon afterwards joined the Society; and Mr. Downs, with the assistance of some neighbouring gentlemen, built a Preaching-house for the Society, at Tuckaho, the place where he lived.

Since the peace between England and the United States of America, true Christianity has had a very extensive spread on that Continent. There have been many remarkable effusions of the spirit of truth and grace, in different parts of it, which have been productive of a very great revival of genuine piety and virtue. But the limits of this work will not allow me to enter into any detail on the subject. Suffice it to say, that in the year 1800, the number in the Methodist Connection, in the United States, was upwards of 60,000, near 50,000 of whom were Whites, and the rest Blacks, or coloured people; and that in 1811, the number, including all those descriptions, amounted to 170,000.

Of the work in Nova-Scotia and New Brunswick, I have less to say. Mr. William Black, a native of Yorkshire, and a very zealous and useful Preacher of the Gospel, resided in one or other of those provinces for many years. During the war, he repeatedly importuned Mr. Wesley to send Preachers to help them. But Mr. Wesley was determined not to send any Missionaries across the Atlantic during the unhappy contest. Mr. Black therefore laboured by himself, endeavouring to preserve alive the little flame he had kindled by the grace of God. But his extensive circuit prevented his enforcing, as he wished, the discipline prescribed by Mr. Wesley. After the peace, the Messrs. Manns, two Preachers from the States, went to Nova-Scotia with the Refugees, and acted in conjunction with Mr. Black. Mr. Wesley also soon after sent over Mr. Wray, a Preacher, to assist him. At the death of Mr. Wesley, there was a Society of about five hundred Whites, and about two hundred Blacks, in that country. It is now increased to upwards of one thousand four hundred.

The great revival of religion in Europe did not merely extend to the Continent of America. The Islands also were made partakers of the benefits thereof. The work of God in the West-India Isles, began in Antigua. A letter from Mr. Nathaniel Gilbert, who had heard the Gospel in England, but was then resident in that Island, dated May 10, 1760, which Mr. Wesley calls "An account of the dawn of a Gospel-day," has the following remarks. "How cautious ought we to be of judging! I verily thought I had come to a perfectly heathenish country, where there was not a Christian to be found: but, blessed be God, there are a few here that fear him. He has not left himself without witness in this dry and barren wilderness, though the number, I fear, is very small indeed. About two weeks before we settled, I signified to one or two persons, that as there was no service at church in the afternoon, any person disposed to join my family, was welcome. I had on the first Sunday, six besides my own family; on the second, nine; and on the third, about eighteen. And it is now not only spread through the town that I have preached, but, I believe, through this Island. I find my disposition very averse to the practice of the Law, and indeed, inclined to nothing but the care of souls. A false shame, and the fear of man, which I have found troublesome for several years, was suddenly removed, (I know not how,) the day before I first expounded in the town."

Mr. Francis Gilbert, his brother, also observes, "The ground seems to be prepared for the seed; for many are ready to hear, and I trust from a better principle than mere curiosity. We have taken a house for preaching in. But it is not half large enough, though it will contain two hundred persons. It has been crowded every night, while a number of attentive hearers have stood without."

Mr. Nathaniel Gilbert, who was no less than the Speaker of the House of Assembly, continued his labours in the midst of great reproach, till he had formed a Society of two hundred negroes, all of whom were convinced of sin, and brought to repentance, and many of them truly converted to God. At his death, these were as sheep without a shepherd. About this time, the Moravians sent Missionaries to the West-Indies, who brought a few of those poor destitutes into their Society.

About twenty-four years ago, Mr. John Baxter, a shipwright of the Royal Dock at Chatham, and a Local Preacher in connection with Mr. Wesley, went to Antigua, to work for his Majesty in English Harbour. The love of Christ soon constrained him to bear a public testimony for the King of kings. He collected the scattered remains of Mr. Gilbert's labours; and for seven or eight years, with surprising assiduity, walked through the dews of the evenings, when his work in the harbour was over, to instruct for an hour the slaves on the plantations: and the Sabbath days he entirely devoted to religious labours. In this way did he lay himself out for the cause of God, enduring very great opposition and persecution, till he had raised a Society of at least one thousand members, almost all of whom were Blacks. Of these several preached: and though their language and abilities were not sufficient for the instruction of the Whites, they were highly profitable to the people of their own colour.

In the latter end of the year 1787, Dr. Coke sailed for Nova-Scotia, with three Missionaries. But the westerly winds from the coast of America blew with such violence, that the captain of the vessel in which they sailed, after striving in vain to reach the Harbour of Halifax, was obliged to bear off for the West-Indies. After inexpressible dangers and sufferings during a voyage of thirteen weeks, they landed at Antigua on Christmas-day. Mr. Baxter, and the Society, as soon as they knew them, rejoiced exceedingly at their arrival. During the short time Dr. Coke remained there, the congregations were large, and the word was attended with the divine blessing. Mr. Warrener remained in the Island, to assist Mr. Baxter, and under their ministry, and that of their successors, the work of God flourished abundantly. Between two and three thousand Negroes, with a very few Whites, were united in Society, hundreds of whom were truly converted to God. The effects of true religion were so great, that military law, which had been constantly enforced at Christmas, for fear of the insurrection of the Negroes, who were at that season of the year allowed two or three days of recreation, was now become a mere form; though at first it had originated in urgent necessity. All the candid men among the Planters acknowledge, that the religious Negroes are the best servants they have: that they will obey more faithfully without a whip, than the others, however severely punished. In the town of St. John, the Negroes that compose the congregation, who are chiefly domestic servants, dress on the Lord's day in the most pleasing manner. The women wear white linen gowns, petticoats, handkerchiefs, and caps. The men also appear equally clean: and in the whole congregation it would be difficult to find a spot of dirt. But, what is still infinitely preferable, many of them are ornaments of civil society, and for deep Christian experience, may put to the blush many great professors in these kingdoms.

The spirit of resignation and of zeal for the salvation of souls, was very remarkably evidenced in one instance by the Society in the town of St. John. During Dr. Coke's visit to the Island, the chapel was filled every evening by the gentlemen and ladies of the town, so that the Negroes were obliged to stand without, at the windows: and yet, though the chapel had been erected by the numerous, continued, but small subscriptions of the Blacks, they bore their expulsion out of their own chapel, not only without the least complaint, but with joy and exultation; in hopes that the Whites might be profited by the preaching of the word. But, alas! the impression made on the minds of the gentry in general, was only like the early dew.

Mr.

Mr. Baxter, let it be observed, gave up an income of four hundred pounds currency per annum, which he received from the Government, as store-keeper in English Harbour, that he might devote himself wholly to the work of God among the Negroes, though he knew that his dependence for a livelihood would then be wholly on Providence.

Nothing can more evidence the sincere love which the members of the Society in this Island bear towards each other, than the attention they pay to those among them who are sick. They attend them, as far as possible, with the greatest patience and diligence; and, by little subscriptions among themselves, procure the best medical assistance.

The inhabitants of this Island amount to about seven thousand Whites, and about thirty thousand Blacks. Two thousand four hundred of the latter are united in Society, besides about two thousand that are members of the Moravian church. The members of both Societies, we have reason to believe, are more or less awakened. Such a divine seed, such a holy leaven, is not perhaps to be found within so small a compass in any other part of the globe.

From Antigua, Dr. Coke, with two or three Missionaries, visited the Island of St. Vincent. Here the Planters have been singularly kind, and have almost universally opened their plantations to the Missionaries. The inhabitants amount to about one thousand Whites, and about eight or ten thousand Blacks. Upwards of eleven hundred of the latter are joined in Society.

A remarkable circumstance occurred in this Island, which deserves to be recorded, as it shews the wickedness of man in his state of nature. One night, about Christmas, 1790, a company of rioters broke into the chapel which the Missionaries had purchased and fitted up in Kingston. They then damaged the benches and other things, and afterwards seized on the Bible, carried it to the public gallows, and hung it in form thereon: where it was found the next morning. The Magistrates of the Island very nobly advertised a reward of a hundred pounds, for the discovery of any of the perpetrators of this audacious villainy.

The third Island which Dr. Coke and the Missionaries visited, was St. Christopher's. Great has been the success of the word of God in this Island. A Society of about two thousand three hundred members has been raised, many of whom are alive to God, and examples of virtue to all around them. This Island contains nearly the same number of inhabitants, as that of Antigua.

The fourth Island visited by the Preachers was St. Eustatius, which belongs to the Dutch West-India Company. Here they met with a very violent persecution from the Government itself, the only instance since the commencement of this great revival, where the Government of any country has openly and professedly supported a persecution. Dr. Coke and the other Missionaries were, at last, driven out of the Island. But, before they departed, a seed of divine grace, was not only sown, but took deep root in the hearts of many. Two hundred precious, persecuted souls have united together, according to the rules laid down by Mr. Wesley: and seven or eight exhorters have been raised among themselves. This Society has indeed verified the ancient proverb, *Virtus sub* *pondere crescit:* Piety and holiness flourish under the cross. In proportion to their numbers, they probably exceed all the Societies in that Archipelago, for genuine religion and all its sacred fruits. This little Island contains about one thousand five hundred Whites, and about seven or eight thousand Blacks.

In 1788, Mr. Wesley sent Dr. Coke, with several Missionaries, to the West-Indies, to extend that blessed work which the Lord had so signally begun. They landed in Barbadoes, on December 9. This Island contains about twenty-five thousand Whites, and about seventy thousand Blacks. But the inhabitants seem to be farther from the kingdom of God, more reluctant to receive instruction, and more callous to conviction, than those of any other of the windward Islands. However, the prospect begins to brighten, and there has been lately some appearance of success.

The Island of Nevis was next visited. The inhabitants consist of about four hundred Whites, and about ten thousand Blacks. About nine hundred of the coloured people and Blacks, are united in Society. The Planters are exceeding friendly: and much good is likely to be done.

The Island of Tortola also was this year visited by Dr. Coke and others. It contains about one thousand Whites, and about nine thousand Blacks. There are several small Islands around it, the whole forming a small Archipelago of themselves. Great has been the out-pouring of the Spirit of God on the inhabitants of this little group of Islands: so that about three thousand of them have been truly turned to God.

In January, 1789, Dr. Coke visited the Island of Jamaica: and began a work there through the divine blessing, against which, we trust, the gates of hell will not prevail. He was succeeded by others: the spirit of persecution has raged in that Island with extreme fury; so that the lives of many pious persons have been almost miraculously saved from the rage of the mob. A Society of above eight hundred members has been raised in Kingston and other parts of the Island. The population of Jamaica amounts, it is supposed, upon a moderate calculation, to half a million. The Island is divided into twenty parishes, in each of which there is no more than one church. The city of Kingston, about thirty years ago, contained 30,000 souls, and it is supposed at present to contain nearly double that number. In this populous city, which is the metropolis of the Island, there is only one church, and that capable of containing no more than 500 persons. According to this calculation, which may be considered a tolerably accurate one, in what a deplorable state, in point of public worship, and consequently of morals, are the great mass of the inhabitants of Kingston! And yet there, by a municipal law, the door of our chapel has been long shut, and continues so to the present!

In 1790, Dr. Coke and Mr. Baxter visited Grenada. They were received with great courtesy by the Governor, and many of the principal gentlemen of the Island. A Society of about a hundred has been formed there: but no extensive good will ever be wrought in that Island, till such Missionaries are stationed there, as are able to preach in

French, which is the native language of far the greatest part of the inhabitants.

In Dominica, an attempt to spread the Gospel has been made with such success, that, in a comparatively short time, the numbers in our Societies there have increased from ninety to six hundred.

Upon the whole, about sixty thousand of the Negroes are now under instruction, in all the Islands unitedly considered. Out of these, about twelve thousand are members of the Society, and are, as far as the Missionaries, who are no judges of the heart, can determine, awakened to a sense of their fallen state, and of their alienation from God by nature. A very considerable part of these latter are converted to God, and give, in their Negro dialect, as clear and distinct an account of the work of grace upon their souls, as any believers in England: and the whole of them, as far as the Missionaries know, fulfil all the relative duties of life, their own masters being the judges; or, if occasionally there be any who transgress the rules of morality, they are excluded from the Society, at least after a neglect of due reproof. And it may be added, that they have all of them made a sacrifice of their most besetting sin—Polygamy.

In Antigua, there are three Missionaries: in St. Christopher's, four: in Tortola, and the Virgin-Islands, four: in Nevis, two: in Dominica, two: in St. Vincent's, three: in Barbadoes, one: in Grenada, two: in St. Bartholomew's, one: in Jamaica, two: and, in Bermuda, one. Some years ago, the Governor of Dominica obliged the Missionary there at that time, to leave the Island, because he would not bear arms, which, as a Minister of the Gospel, he believed he could not conscientiously do; but the Government at home, which has been always ready to administer relief to the Missionaries under persecution, sent directions to the Governors in the West Indies, to permit the Missionaries to labour in their respective Islands, without the obligation of bearing arms; in consequence of which, we have now two Missionaries in Dominica. The Divine Grace and Providence have also raised up about fifty Negro Preachers, who are very useful on the Lord's day; and without whose assistance, the work could not be carried on upon the present extensive scale.

The Black Preachers, by the removal of their masters from one Island to another, have introduced the Gospel among the Heathen into some Islands where no regular Missions had been established.

On the Continent of America, the Methodist Missions among the Heathen, have been of a longer standing than in the West-India Islands. Many thousands of Heathens on that Continent have been brought through the grace of God, to genuine Christianity, that is, to holiness and virtue, by the labours of our Missionaries; besides thousands, who have already been lodged in Abraham's bosom. There is also a considerable number of Catechumens, in whose favour, it is to be hoped, as much may be said in time, as of the others.

The Missions on the Continent of America are now entirely supported by the benevolent and pious on that Continent. And in the West Indies, the Planters and other inhabitants of Antigua, St. Christopher's, Nevis, Tortola, Grenada, and St. Vincent's, are so fully satisfied with the conduct of the Missionaries, and so conscious of the political, as well as religious advantages, resulting from their labours, that they chiefly support the work in those Islands, by voluntary contributions and subscriptions. But though, in the other Islands, there are several friends of the Missions, among the rich and benevolent, yet the work is still very burdensome to the Fund in Europe.

Thus far the Grace and Providence of God have blessed the labours of the Missionaries. The expense however is very great. But the enlargement of the Redeemer's kingdom, and the welfare and happiness of the World, are objects of such infinite moment, that every benevolent person must rejoice in the success of, and be ready to assist, so disinterested and important an undertaking.

About the year 1768, Mr. Coughlan, a travelling Preacher in connection with Mr. Wesley, was ordained by the Bishop of London, at the request of the Society, for the propagation of the Gospel, that he might be qualified for the office of a Missionary, for the Island of Newfoundland.

For three years and upwards, he laboured in Harbour-Grace and Carbonnear, without any apparent success, and in the midst of great persecution. He was prosecuted in the chief court of the Island; but escaped the fury of his enemies. In letters to the Society for the propagation of the Gospel, he was accused of almost every thing that was bad. When his enemies found that these methods were not sufficient to remove him, they employed a Physician to poison him, who was soon after converted to God, and discovered this wicked design.

At last the Lord condescended to visit this miserable people, and poured out his Spirit abundantly. Many were soon turned to the Most High. Mr. Coughlan immediately united the truly sincere in regular classes: On this, the persecution grew hotter; till at last, he was summoned before the Governor; but the Governor declared in his favour, and appointed him a Justice of the Peace; on which, the persecution ceased, and he laboured for four years, in much quietness, and with great success. He then returned to England.

On Mr. Coughlan's departure, Mr. Stretton and Mr. Thoomy, two Local Preachers in connection with Mr. Wesley, undertook the care of the Societies, which Mr. Coughlan had formed: but these gentlemen being much engaged in mercantile business, the Societies soon fell into decay.

Some years after this, Mr. Wesley appointed a Missionary for Newfoundland, who went over accordingly, and was rendered useful to the people. A little after Mr. Wesley's death, Mr. Black, who had the care of the Societies in Nova-Scotia and New Brunswick, visited Newfoundland, and was remarkably useful. Such a revival took place under his labours, as will not soon be forgotten. Since then other Missionaries have been appointed, and a Society of upwards of two hundred people has been raised. Thus, in this barren spot, the Lord has raised up a people to serve him. "He has, indeed, made a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert." That dreary, rocky, uncultivated coast is likely to bring forth a plentiful harvest for the Lord.

SECTION XVI.

OF THE METHODIST BENEVOLENT, OR STRANGERS' FRIEND SOCIETIES, AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

WHOEVER has read with attention the preceding pages, must have observed, that the design of the Methodists, from their very origin, has been to seek, and to save that which was lost, and to do spiritual and temporal good to the poorest, vilest, and most despised of mankind. With this view it was, that the Rev. Messrs. Wesleys, and Whitefield, in the beginning of their religious course, visited, and, according to their ability, relieved the prisoners in the Castle at Oxford, and the sick and poor of the town. With this design they consented, when applied to by the Trustees of the Colony in Georgia, to traverse the Atlantic Ocean, and go as Missionaries to the Indians. With the same intention, when in this kingdom the Churches were shut against them, for reasons above specified, they went out into the streets and lanes of the towns and cities, and into the *high-ways and hedges*, to call sinners to repentance. They visited, as we have seen, not only the most populous, but also and especially the most ignorant and corrupt parts of the kingdom; proclaiming, and frequently at the hazard of their lives, the Gospel of the kingdom of God, to the Colliers of Kingswood, near Bristol; of Wednesbury, in Staffordshire; and of the neighbourhood of Newcastle; as also to the Tinners in Cornwall, and the Manufacturers in Yorkshire and Lancashire. Every where, in town or country, where God opened them a door, and they could obtain access,

cess, they endeavoured to communicate instruction in righteousness to the most ignorant and unenlightened,—to reform the most vicious and profane, and to spread civilization and industry, as well as knowledge and piety among their fellow-creatures. In pursuance of the same end, which they have kept in view from the beginning, the Methodists of late years, as has been just related, with great labour and expense, have established Missions among the Negroes in the West India Island, the Indians of North America, the forlorn inhabitants of Newfoundland, and the Catholics in Ireland. I have now to observe, that with the same design, they have also founded, chiefly in Great Britain and Ireland, two other Institutions, viz. *Benevolent, or Strangers' Friend Societies*, and *Sunday Schools*.

The former of these Charities commenced among the Methodists in London in the year 1784, under the patronage of the late Rev. Mr. Wesley.—Some pious persons, of the Methodist Society, who occasionally visited the sick, found many, not only grievously afflicted with various diseases, but entirely destitute of the very necessaries of life. After some consideration, a plan was formed to raise a fund, for the relief of such miserable objects, by each person subscribing a penny or two-pence a week. But the applications becoming daily more and more frequent, and the means of supplying the wants of the destitute and afflicted, being very small, it was soon found necessary to ask help of persons of more affluent circumstances. The consequence was that the Benevolent, or Strangers' Friend Society, was formed, at the period above mentioned; to administer relief to the sick poor, that were destitute of other help, of all denominations; each member of that Institution agreeing to contribute, according to his ability, in order to raise a Fund for that purpose. Since that time, many other Societies of a similar nature, have been established among the Methodists, in different parts of the kingdom, as at Bristol, Liverpool, Birmingham, Manchester, Sheffield, Leeds, Hull, and in most towns and populous villages, where they have considerable congregations, and where their friends are numerous.

The rules of these Institutions may differ in some lesser matters, in different places: but in the most important points they all agree. The Charity is no where confined to the poor or sick members of the Methodist Societies, nor have they any preference above others. So far from it, that at some places, as at Manchester, (where the Fund is larger than any where else, except at London,) the poor members of the Methodist Society have no relief from it whatever. If any poor and sick person, that had had relief from it, should become a member of the Methodist Society, he would immediately be deprived of that help, and though still distressed, could, according to their Rules, have no more aid from that quarter.*

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* Let the anonymous and intolerant authors of that virulent publication, termed the "Anti-Jacobin Review," consider this, and be ashamed of the *infamous falsehood* of their assertion, when they say, (Review for April, 1801, page 396,) "Their (the Methodists) benevolent fund, might more properly be called a fund for Proselytism. For we speak from personal knowledge." *We speak—Who* speak? Let them give us their names: Let them dare to come forth from their covert, and shew themselves, that we may look the men in the face, who thus wickedly calumniate us. They go on: "It (the benevolent fund) is composed of weekly, monthly, or quarterly subscriptions of all their Members:" No:

The reason of this regulation there was; not so much to demonstrate to the world, the disinterestedness of the Methodists in this Charity, and stop the mouths of gainsayers, as to provide that there might be no temptation to any poor person to make an hypocritical profession of religion, and seek an admission into the Methodist Society, with a view to obtain

not of one half---of one quarter, nor of one tenth, perhaps not of one twentieth part of them :---" in proportion to their means :" A mistake again. The subscription is perfectly voluntary, and the rich do not always give the most :---" placed at the disposal of certain elders of the Society :"---a third and double mistake. We have no persons in our Societies, who bear the name of Elders, and if we had---if our Leaders of Classes, the Stewards of our Societies, or the Trustees of our Chapels, bore that name, still this money is not at their disposal; but at that of the visiters of the sick, and the committee, chosen from the subscribers to superintend and manage this charity, some of whom are not even members of the Methodist Society. They proceed, " who visit the sick poor, and invariably measure the quantum of relief, by the prospect of gaining a convert." This is worse than a mistake: it is an *absolute, senseless slander.* There is not a shadow of truth in it, and it is perfectly ridiculous. Pray will these gentlemen tell us what advantage we should gain by gathering a number of sick and poor people into our Societies---to be supported by charity? Who must support them? Others almost as poor as themselves? Or the richer members of the Society? The former could not, and if such a burden were laid upon the latter, they must have both more zeal and disinterestedness than these gentlemen, I think, will allow them to possess, if they bore it long. They would soon cease to be members, and the consequence would be, that our Societies would be composed entirely of poor people that must live upon charity, and be cast upon the parish! And then how could our plan be supported? How could the contributions at the Class-meetings, which these gentlemen glory in having discovered, and which they wish to work up into an objection against us, be raised? This is one among the very many instances which might easily be produced, of the false and groundless charges brought against the people called Methodists, in that most inflammatory publication.

temporal relief. But in no place, I believe, are one fourth part of the objects relieved in connection with the Methodists. Two things, therefore, the reader will observe, 1st, That these Charities are not confined to persons of any nation, sect, party, or denomination whatever, but Protestants, Roman Catholics, Strangers, and Foreigners, have an equal right to be relieved by them; and, 2dly, That the Visiters are not influenced by former causes of present distress, but extend the arms of their mercy to all who are objects of pity and compassion, requiring no other qualification in those they relieve than a sufficiency of evident distress. Any person who will be at the trouble of attending the weekly meetings of the Visiters of the sick, and of the Stewards and Managers of these funds; or that will inspect the books in which the names and places of abode of all that are relieved are entered, will be fully satisfied that what I state is the fact.

It is presumed little need be said on the usefulness of such an Institution; this must be acknowledged by all who believe the Bible. To visit orphans, and widows in their affliction, is accounted by St. James, a principal part of pure and undefiled Religion; and our Lord declares that he will reckon that kindness which is shewn to the stranger, the hungry, the naked, the sick, and the prisoner, as shewn unto himself. And as to the most proper objects of charity, it is a melancholy truth, that, however deplorable the state of street-beggars may appear, these, even when no impostors, are not, in general, the most necessitous of mankind. Cellars, garrets, and such like places, exhibit much more affecting scenes of misery. In these abodes of human woe, the wretched inhabitants are frequently found pining with want, cold, and disease; and either exerting the last effort of nature to support themselves amidst the severest frowns of adversity, or languishing under the most powerful influence of complicated affliction.

Those who live in affluence, or even those of a middle rank in life, can have little conception of the scenes of misery, which may be daily found in London, and other large towns; to which persons often come from distant parts to seek employment, and are soon, not only in great straits, but confined by sickness or some melancholy accident, which renders it impracticable to send them back to their own parishes. Others, who were once, perhaps, in affluent circumstances, are now reduced to the lowest ebb of distress, and through modesty, or for some other reason, are without friends, unknown, and destitute. Multitudes of these objects of pity have been discovered, who were utterly friendless and helpless, deprived of every means of sustenance, and generally without the comforting beams of that religion, which, penetrating the gloom of human misery, opens a bright prospect into another world. Added to this, they are frequently strangers in the place: at a great distance from their parish; and, because of extreme affliction, incapable of applying for relief.

How often have the Visiters of these Societies found the distressed mother surrounded by her numerous and helpless offspring, who, with piteous cries, were in vain craving that morsel which it was out of her power to afford them, while her husband and their father, whose industry formerly procured them a comfortable subsistence, lay stretched on a miserable pallet of straw, languishing under the last agonies of a fever.

How often have they found the disconsolate widow and her orphan children, whose staff and support had been summoned away by the messenger of death, from the midst of his family, or cut off by the fate of war in a foreign clime, immured in a dreary garret, altogether insufficient to protect them from the storms of heaven, and without even so much as a little straw to lie on; without fire to warm their shivering bodies, or raiment to cover them; without food to support, or medicine to restore them; and, in a word, sinking under all the aggravated horrors of want and disease!

Again. How often have they met with the mutilated and worn-out soldier and seaman, who had fought the battles of their country, shed their best blood, and forfeited their limbs in her cause; who had dared all the dangers of the field, and braved all the perils of the ocean: but deprived, by some unforeseen circumstance, of that recompence which a watchful legislature has provided, were obliged to depend upon casual Charity for subsistence. And being at length overtaken by sickness, surrounded by strangers, and reduced to the last extremity of distress, they anxiously looked for that asylum from suffering, in death, which life would not afford them.

How far the utility of an institution of this kind may be extended, time *alone* can *fully* determine; but if we may be allowed to judge of the future by the past, we will venture to say, that, from the *variety* of objects which it embraces, the advantages *eventually* resulting to society, both in a *civil* and *moral* point of view, are *almost* incalculable; and may, probably, reach to *generations yet unborn.* And, in order to illustrate this, in some small degree, I need only enumerate *a few* of the beneficial consequences which have *already* ensued from the plan adopted. And,

1st. By a *personal* attendance at the houses of those who are recommended to the notice of the Society, or voluntarily apply for relief from it, we discover whether the case is *real* misery, or *fictitious* distress; whether *undesigning* poverty, or *artful* imposture; and by a *timely* alleviation of the one, and a *seasonable* correction of the other, we serve the cause of the *real* poor, and effectually prevent the *misapplication* of the public bounty.

2d. By formal application being *regularly* made to neighbouring and remote parishes, in behalf of their respective paupers, whether residents at the place, or strangers, we either procure their relief, or removal, and thus materially lessen the poor-rates of our own parish; while, at the same time, (which all will allow is highly necessary,) we introduce a regulation in the police of others, and thus, in our measure, prevent such as are in distress from becoming street-beggars, rid the town of numbers who are already such, and oblige other parishes to maintain their own poor.

3d. By refusing aid to those who are too indolent to help themselves, and by holding up every encouragement to honest industry, we furnish a considerable antidote for idleness, and afford a constant spur to exertion; and thus point out to the poor the best way of serving themselves and their generation, and, in some degree, preserve their rising offspring from the dangerous effects of bad example.

4th. As the health of the labouring poor is of the highest consequence, their subsistence principally depending upon it, we conceive, that by providing such, on occasion, with medical aid, in cases of sickness, we not only essentially serve their families, but Society at large, by preventing them from becoming chargeable to the parish. And as want of cleanliness is so frequent a source of disease, by refusing our help to those who wilfully persevere in the neglect of it, the health and comfort of the lowest classes are greatly promoted.

5th. In relieving the necessitous, the Visiters use the greatest caution. They do not always give relief in money; for, however well meant on the part of the giver, it is but too often, from either ignorance or principle, ill applied on that of the receiver. And therefore, in some places where it can conveniently be done, they often lay out the money themselves: and thus on the one hand, by the relief being applied in the very way it is required, the situation of the distressed is rendered abundantly more comfortable, and on the other, the tribute of humanity is not wasted.

6th. Many who are of ability, and who really desire to succour the distressed, befriend the friendless, and minister to the souls and bodies of the wretched; know not where to find such as they may be certain are real objects of their charity. Indeed the lanes and alleys, which such miserable beings inhabit, forbid their approach, and are carefully avoided by those, who wish to shun contagious disease, and whose happy lot has been cast in far purer air, and more pleasant places. Now the Members of this Benevolent Institution seek for those, which such charitably disposed persons wish to find, and by applying their bounty, according to their wish, supply their lack of service, and become their servants, and those of the poor.

To the great honour of this nation, charitable Institutions of various kinds have been established, and on their respective plans much good has been done; but this good has been generally confined either to a certain number of resident individuals, with particular qualifications, and who have had friends to recommend them, or to such as could make personal application for themselves; whereas, this Society, by its acquaintance with the wretched haunts of misery, discovers objects the most distressed, but too obscure and dejected to apply for relief in any shape whatever, and who could only hope for it, under God, from such a Society as this, which is so constituted as to extend its beneficence to the very uttermost of its means.

In a nation, professing Christianity, it is surprising what ignorance, respecting even the very first principles of religion, pervades the lower classes of the people.—Many persons who have come under the notice of this Society, were found to have very little more knowledge of them than the beasts that perish. Now, as the concerns of the soul are beyond comparison the most important; it is therefore a principal article in this Institution to pay strict attention to the eternal interests of the objects visited, and to give them religious instruction as well as temporal relief; so that, if removed from this world by death, they may previously be made acquainted with the way of salvation through Jesus Christ; and, if restored to health, they may learn their duty to God and to Society at large. And in this, the Visiters have had great success. In very many cases, they have witnessed a partial reformation, at least. Numbers have been so far reclaimed, that decency and order have been introduced into their families, and the most glaring profanation of the Sabbath has been succeeded by a serious and regular attendance on public worship. But in others, a far more important change has been effected. Many who were long notorious examples of complicated wickedness, have become living proofs of the truth of that pure and enlightened religion which is *full of mercy and good fruits*, and whose language is *Peace upon earth, and good-will towards men.*

It will be observed, that no institution is conducted upon a more disinterested plan; no expenses whatever are incurred by this Society, in respect to its government. None of the Visiters have ever received any fee or reward for their services, nor have they ever desired it; always considering the sacrifice of their time, and the risk of their health and lives, (which are sometimes much exposed to the attacks of dangerous fevers, &c.) to be amply compensated by the pleasure of doing good. They only wish to be enabled to do more; and look for no reward, till the resurrection of the just.

The following are the general Rules of this Society in London, which do not differ, I believe, materially from those of the Benevolent Societies in Manchester, Liverpool, Sheffield, Leeds, Hull, and other large places.

I. A Committee, chosen from the Subscribers, manage the concerns of this Society. The Committee choose annually, a President, Treasurer, and Secretary.

II. The Committee choose quarterly, Sub-Committees, to act for each part of the town. The Sub-Committees appoint the Visiters, and take particular care that they be persons of unimpeachable character, and capable of giving religious instruction to those they visit.

III. The Sub-Committees and Visiters, at each part of the town, meet once a week, (with any Subscribers who may wish to attend,) to settle the weekly accounts, receive and consider cases, and apportion relief.

IV. The General and all the Sub-Committees meet together once a month, to regulate the concerns of the Society.

V. Proper books are provided, and regular entries made of receipts and disbursements, with the names and abodes of the objects relieved. The books are always free of access for the inspection of Subscribers and the Public.

VI. In order to avoid imposition, no person is, on any pretence, relieved previously to his being visited; and care is taken that the relief be properly applied. The Visiters recommend cleanliness to those they visit, and a free circulation of fresh air.

VII. In order to regulate the assistance necessary from this Society, inquiry is made of the neighbours, &c. on the first visit, what means of subsistence the distressed family derives from any parish, club, or other source.

VIII. Each Visiter considers the cases, to which he is appointed to attend at the weekly meeting, as under his immediate care during the week, and also endeavours to see every casual case on the day first apprized of it, particularly if in great distress, or death be apprehended.

In London, during the course of the year 1810, no less than *four thousand and fifty-five families* were visited and relieved, many of them for the space of two months; and the sum of one thousand eight hundred sixty-eight pounds, ten shillings, was expended in their relief. In Manchester, Liverpool, Hull, Leeds, Bristol, Sheffield, Birmingham, York, and numerous other places, similar Societies, among the Methodists, have long existed; and they still continue to enjoy the unspeakable pleasure of relieving the distresses of many thousands annually, and of contributing to their spiritual improvement.

I have also mentioned SUNDAY SCHOOLS, as another useful Institution established among us. These from their first rise in England, have, in a peculiar manner, been countenanced and supported by the Methodist Societies and congregations, and that with no other design, than that which has called forth their efforts in all the other instances which have come under our consideration in this work, viz. to do spiritual and temporal good to those who, however unworthy, need it most.

It will readily be acknowledged by my readers in general, that the many Schools and Seminaries for the instrũction of youth, founded and endowed by our ancestors, afford an honourable testimony, both of their good sense and liberality. Convinced of the importance of religious knowledge and a christian education, they wished to extend the blessing to the lower ranks of mankind, and raise them from a state of ignorance and degradation, to a participation of the advantages attached to a more improved state of society. Their pious attentions have, in many instances, produced the wished-for effects: knowledge has been more generally diffused; the interests of religion and virtue promoted; and various instances have occurred, in which individuals, who must otherwise have languished in obscurity, have become the distinguished ornaments of society, and have thus been rendered a blessing to mankind.

But though much has been done by the benevolence and charity of former ages, much still remains to be done, by the present generation. The benefit to be derived from the different Schools already established, though very numerous and liberally endowed, cannot, for many obvious reasons, be extended to those children who are the peculiar objects of this Institution.

From an attentive consideration of the actual state of numerous families amongst the poor, a very considerable number of children are found in such indigent circumstances, that they are under the necessity of being early employed in labouring to procure their own maintenance; the consequence of which is, that they cannot possibly be allowed any time for the purposes of instruction or education. It was in order to remove these difficulties, that the idea of forming Sunday Schools was first suggested, and the plan was immediately adopted, and soon extended to almost every part of the kingdom. It was one of those happy thoughts which common sense immediately approves, and we are only surprised that it should have been reserved for the present age to carry the scheme into execution.

The mind of man, however, has never yet been able to form any useful design or contrive any extensive mode of charity, against which some objection or other has not been raised. That various objections, therefore, should have been urged against Sunday Schools, is not at all surprising. Some of these have doubtless arisen from a want of acquaintance with the nature, end, and design of this Charity; others, perhaps, may have derived their source from some considerations and motives that it would at once be improper and illiberal to mention.

Some have suggested, and even insinuated, that these Schools have a tendency to disqualify the children, instructed in them, for discharging the duties of that humble station, to which the providence of God has been pleased to call them. This objection must instantly fall to the ground when those accounts of the Institution, which, from time to time, are laid before the public, are candidly considered. All who peruse these, or who will take the trouble of attending these Schools, which are open to any person, high or low, rich or poor, magistrate or subject, will find that no instruction is given the children but what has a tendency to impress their minds with a sense of moral and religious obligation. They are taught nothing but what tends to remind them of the several duties which they owe to God, their parents, their superiors in church and state, to themselves, and to all mankind. They are brought to an acquaintance with the Scriptures, and of course with the principles of universal goodness and truth. And a love of order, peace, diligence, and humility, is constantly enforced amongst them, together with every thing that is lovely and praise-worthy.

I do not hesitate, to pronounce, and I believe that every considerate person will unite with me in entertaining the same opinion, that the establishment of these Schools which provides for the instruction of such multitudes of poor children, who were utterly destitute of the means and advantages of education;—which initiates them into early habits of piety and orderly conduct;—which leads them to fear God, and honour the King;—to reverence the Sabbath day;—which awakens them to an attention to the various duties of life;—and which, in short, combines some of the most important advantages of education, must, in their very nature and design, form a most salutary and beneficent Institution, and such as is entitled to the warmest approbation of an enlightened Public.

When so enlarged and boundless a sphere of usefulness is presented to view, it is impossible to conceive what may yet be effected by the influence of these Schools, the salutary effects of which are not confined to the metropolis alone, but are extended to society in general, and the country at large. Their influence in the intellectual, political, and moral world, must be considerable indeed. And perhaps the design may have been first suggested and originally intended by the Providence of God, to counteract those infidel, and levelling principles, which have been so industriously propagated, for some years past, and which have poisoned the minds and corrupted the hearts of so many thousands.*

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* It is well known that a report has gone abroad, and is in circulation among some, both Clergy and Laity, that "Sedition

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The friends, therefore, and zealous promoters of this salutary and benevolent institution, by uniting their labours and benefactions, may hope, through the divine blessing, to check the torrent of profaneness, irreligion, and anarchy; and, in a great measure, preserve the rising generation from those loose and dangerous principles, which bring guilt and misery on mankind. Nor is it unreasonable to hope, that, by diffusing the knowledge of the Scriptures, and enforcing the duties of Christianity, they may be instrumental, in the hands of God, in forwarding the accomplishment of that glorious prediction, in which we are assured, that "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

SECTION XVII.

OF THE DESIGNS OF THE METHODISTS; WITH AN APPEAL TO THE PUBLIC.

THE reader is now in full possession of the history of Methodism. He has before him not only the *Origin* and *Progress* of this Sect, so generally spoken against, but also their *Doctrine* and *Discipline*. And it concerns him to inquire, before he join the common

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and Atheism are the real objects of these Institutions," amongst the Methodists and Dissenters, "and not religion." With regard to this, (leaving it to the Dissenters to answer for themselves,) I shall content myself with observing here, that to all who know the Methodists, or who have any acquaintance with the plan on which their Schools are conducted, or with the characters of the persons concerned in conducting them, whether as Subscribers, Teachers, or Managers, such uncharitable insinuations, most improbable in themselves, and supported by no evidence whatever, will carry with them their own confutation.

cry against us, whether the rise and progress of Methodism be not the rise and progress of a revival of experimental and practical Christianity in the British Empire. This is certainly the view which the Methodists themselves have of it, and if they are mistaken, they will be thankful to any one who will undeceive them. Let it also be considered, whether the Methodist Doctrine be not the very doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, of the Reformers, and of the Church of England, at least in every point of importance: and whether their discipline be not rational in itself, and sanctioned by the New Testament, and the usage of the first Christians, as well as manifestly calculated to promote godliness and righteousness, the love of God and all mankind, with its proper fruits and effects, that is, true Christianity; which is the *only* end we have in view, and an end to which all our efforts are continually directed.

This is a point, to which the reader is requested especially to attend. Our end is, not "to form a Sect," or to bring people to this or the other speculative opinion, mode of worship, or form of Church government, but simply to *make them Christians;*—Christians in heart and life, in temper, word, and work;—such as lived in the early days of Christianity, and such as, we conceive, may live still, Jesus Christ and his *Gospel* being the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. And that our ideas of the first Christians, are not very erroneous, as also that we do not materially differ from them in our mode of living, we have the testimony of a dignified Churchman, and most able Defender of Christianity, who will not be suspected of undue partiality to the Methodists, I mean the Arch-Deacon Paley. In his

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"View of the Evidences of Christianity," perhaps the best work of the kind which this or any age has produced, he speaks thus: "After men became Christians, much of their time was spent in prayer, devotion, in religious meetings, in celebrating the Eucharist, in conferences, in exhortations, in preaching, in an affectionate intercourse with one another, and in corresponding with other Societies. Perhaps their mode of life, in its form and habit, was not very unlike the Unitus Fratrum, or Modern Methodists."*

But here it will be objected. "Why do you talk of making people Christians, and of spreading Christianity in this country, which was a Christian country before the Methodists existed, and where the inhabitants have been Christians from generation to generation?" This question I beg leave to answer in the words of Mr. Wesley, in his letter to the Rev. Dr. Conyers Middleton, occasioned by his *Free Inquiry*.

"None can deny, that the people of England, in general, are *called* Christians. They are *called* so, a few only excepted, by others, as well as by themselves. But I presume no man will say the *name* makes the *thing*; that men *are* Christians, barely because they are *called* so. It must be allowed, 2. That the people of England, generally speaking, have been christenened, or baptized: but neither can we infer, 'These were once baptized; therefore, they are Christians now.' It is, 3. allowed, That many of those who were once baptized, and are called Christians to this day, hear the word of God, attend public prayers, and partake of the Lord's Supper. But neither does this prove, that they are

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* Page 98, second edition.

Christians. For, notwithstanding this, some of them live in open sin: and others, (though not conscious to themselves of hypocrisy, yet) are utter strangers to the *religion of the heart;* are full of pride, vanity, covetousness, ambition; of hatred, anger, malice or envy; and consequently, are no more spiritual Christians than the open drunkard, or common swearer.

"Now these being removed, where are the Christians, from whom we may properly term England a Christian country? The men who have *the mind which was in Christ*, and who *walk as he also walked?* Whose inmost soul is renewed after the image of God; and who endeavour to be outwardly holy, as he who hath called them is holy? There are doubtless a few such to be found. To deny this, would be 'want of candour.' But how few! How thinly scattered up and down! And as for a Christian visible church, or a body of Christians, visibly united together, where is this to be seen?

Ye different sects, who all declare,
Lo! here is Christ, or Christ is there,
Your stronger proofs *divinely* give,
And *shew* me where the *Christians live!*

"And what use is it of, what good end does it serve, to term England a Christian country? Does it do any honour to our great Master, among those who are not called by his name? Does it recommend christianity to the Jews, the Mahometans, or the avowed Heathens? Surely no one can conceive it does. It only makes Christianity stink in their nostrils. Does it answer any good end, with regard to those who are called by this worthy name? I fear not: but rather, an exceeding bad one. For does it not keep multitudes easy in their heathen practice? Does it not make or keep, still greater numbers, satisfied with their heathen tempers? Does it not directly tend to make both the one and the other imagine, that they are what indeed they are not? That they are Christians, while they are utterly without Christ, and without God in the world?—If men are not Christians, till they are renewed after the image of Christ, and if the people of England, in general, are not thus renewed, why do we term them so? 'The god of this world hath long blinded their hearts.' Let us do nothing to increase that blindness; but rather to recover them from that strong delusion, that they may no longer believe a lie.

"Let us labour to convince all mankind, that to be a real Christian, is, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and to serve him with all our strength; to love our neighbour as ourselves, and therefore to do unto every man, as we would he should do unto us."

To enlarge a little on this important point. "A Christian cannot think of the Author of his being, without abasing himself before Him: without a deep sense of the distance between a worm of earth, and him that sitteth on the circle of the heavens. In his presence he sinks into the dust, knowing himself to be less than nothing in his eye: and being conscious, in a manner words cannot express, of his own littleness, ignorance, foolishness. So that he can only cry out from the fulness of his heart, 'O God! what is man! what am I!'

"He has a continual sense of his dependence on the Parent of Good, for his being, and all the blessings that attend it. To him he refers every natural, and every moral endowment, with all that is commonly ascribed either to fortune, or to the wisdom, courage, or merit, of the possessor. And hence he acquiesces in whatsoever appears to be his will, not only with patience, but with thankfulness. He willingly resigns all he is, all he has, to his wise and gracious disposal. The ruling temper of his heart, is the most absolute submission, and the tenderest gratitude to his sovereign Benefactor. And this grateful love creates filial fear: an awful reverence toward him; and an earnest care not to give place to any disposition, nor to admit an action, word, or thought, which might in any degree displease that indulgent Power, to whom he owes his life, breath, and all things.

"And as he has the strongest affection for the Fountain of all Good, so he has the firmest confidence in him: a confidence which neither pleasure nor pain, neither life nor death, can shake. But yet this, far from creating sloth or indolence, pushes him on to the most vigorous industry. It causes him to put forth all his strength, in obeying Him in whom he confides. So that he is not faint in his mind, not weary of doing whatever he believes to be his will. And as he knows the most acceptable worship of God, is to imitate Him he worships, so he is continually labouring to transcribe into himself all his imitable perfections: in particular, his justice, mercy, and truth, so eminently displayed in all his creatures.

"Above all, remembering that God is love, he is conformed to the same likeness. He is full of love to his neighbour: of universal love; not confined to one sect or party; not restrained to those who agree with him in opinions, or in outward modes of worship; or to those who are allied to him by blood, or recommended by nearness of place. Neither does he love those only that love him, or that are endeared to him by intimacy or acquaintance. But his love resembles that of Him whose mercy is over all his works. It soars above all these scanty bounds; embracing neighbours and strangers, friends and enemies: yea, not only the good and gentle, but also the froward, the evil, and unthankful. For he loves every soul that God has made; every child of man, of whatever place or nation. And yet this universal benevolence does in no wise interfere with a peculiar regard for his relations, friends, and benefactors: a fervent love for his country; and the most endeared affection to all men of integrity, of clear and generous virtue.

" And this universal, disinterested love, is productive of all right affections. It is fruitful of gentleness, tenderness, sweetness; of humanity, courtesy, and affability. It makes the Christian rejoice in the virtues of all, and bear a part in their happiness; at the same time that he sympathizes with their pains, and compassionates their infirmities. It creates modesty, condescension, prudence, together with calmness, and evenness of temper. It is the parent of generosity, openness, and frankness, void of jealousy and suspicion. It begets candour, and willingness to believe, and hope whatever is kind and friendly of every man; and invincible patience, never overcome of evil, but overcoming evil with good.

" The same love constrains him to converse, not only with a strict regard to truth, but with artless sincerity and genuine simplicity, as one in whom there is no guile. And not content with abstaining from all such expressions as are contrary to justice or truth, he endeavours to refrain from every unloving word, either to a present or an absent person; in all his conversation aiming at this, either to improve himself in knowledge or virtue, or to make those with whom he converses some way wiser, or better, or happier, than they were before.

"The same love is productive of all right actions. It leads him into an earnest and steady discharge of all social offices, of whatever is due to relations of every kind; to his friends, to his country, and to any particular community whereof he is a member. It prevents his willingly hurting or grieving any man. It guides him into an uniform practice of justice and mercy, equally extensive with the principle whence it flows. It constrains him to do all possible good, of every possible kind, to all men; and makes him invariably resolved, in every circumstance of life, to do that, and that only, to others, which, supposing he were himself in the same situation, he would desire they should do to him.

"And as he is easy to others, so he is easy in himself. He is free from the painful swellings of pride, from the flames of anger, from the impetuous gusts of irregular self-will. He is no longer tortured with envy or malice, or with unreasonable and hurtful desire. He is no more enslaved to the pleasures of sense, but has power both over his mind and body, in a continued cheerful course of sobriety, of temperance, and chastity. He knows how to use all things in their place, and yet is superior to them all. He stands above those low pleasures of imagination, which captivate vulgar minds, whether arising from what mortals term greatness, or novelty, or beauty. All these too he can taste, and still look upward; still aspire to nobler enjoyments. Neither is he a slave to fame: popular breath affects not him: he stands steady, and collected in himself.

" And he who seeks no praise, cannot fear dispraise. Censure does not make him unhappy, being conscious to himself that he would not willingly offend, and that he has the approbation of the Lord of all. He cannot fear want; knowing in whose hand is the earth, and the fulness thereof, and that it is impossible for him to with-hold from one that fears him any manner of thing that is good. He cannot fear pain; knowing it will never be sent, unless it be for his real advantage: and that then his strength will be proportioned to it, as it has always been in times past. He cannot fear death, being able to trust him he loves with his soul as well as his body; yea, glad to leave the corruptible body in the dust, till it is raised incorruptible and immortal. So that in honour or shame, in abundance or want, in ease or pain, in life or death, always, and in all things he has learned to be content, to be easy, thankful, joyful, happy.

" He is happy in knowing there is a God, an intelligent cause, and Lord of all, and that he himself is not the produce either of blind chance, or inexorable necessity. He is happy in the full assurance he has, that this Creator and End of all things, is a Being of boundless wisdom, of infinite power to ex-execute all the designs of his wisdom, and of no less infinite goodness to direct all his power to the advantage of all his creatures. Nay, even the consideration of his immutable justice, rendering to all their due, of his unspotted holiness, of his all-sufficiency in himself, and of that immense ocean of all perfections, which centre in God from eternity to eternity, is a continual addition to the happiness of a Christian.

" A farther addition is made thereto, while in contemplating even the things that surround him, that thought strikes warmly upon his heart,

' These are thy glorious works, Parent of Good :'

while he takes knowledge of the invisible things of God, even his eternal power and wisdom, in the things that are seen, the heavens, the earth, the fowls of the air, the lilies of the field. How much more, while, rejoicing in the constant care which God still takes of the work of his own hand, he breaks out in a transport of love and praise, ' O Lord, our Governor! How excellent is thy name in all the earth! Thou hast set thy glory above the heavens !' While he, as it were, sees the Lord sitting upon his throne, and ruling all things well ; while he observes the general providence of God, co-extended with his whole creation, and surveys all the effects of it in the heavens and earth, as a well-pleased spectator ; while he sees the wisdom and goodness of his general government descending to every particular ; so presiding over the whole universe, as over a single person ; so watching over every single person, as if he were the whole universe ; how does he exult, when he reviews the various traces of almighty goodness, in what has befallen himself, in the several circumstances and changes of his own life! All which, he now sees, have been allotted to him and dealt out, in number, weight, and measure. With what triumph of soul, in surveying either the general or particular providence of God, does he observe every line pointing out an hereafter, every scene opening into eternity!

"He is peculiarly and inexpressibly happy, in the clearest and fullest conviction, 'This all powerful, all wise, all gracious Being, this Governor of all, loves *me*. This lover of my soul is always with me, is never absent, no, not for a moment. And I love Him; there is none in heaven but him, none on earth that I desire beside Him. And he has given me to resemble himself; He has stamped his image on my heart. And I live unto Him; I do His will; I glorify Him with my body and my spirit. And it will not be long before I shall die unto him; I shall die into the arms of God. And then farewel sin and pain; then it only remains, that I should live with Him for ever.'

"This is the plain, naked, scriptural portraiture of a Christian; and can calm reason conceive either a more amiable or more desirable character?"

Now to form such Christians as these, was the sole design of Mr. Wesley's preaching and labours, and of every step he took; and is also the end still pursued by the Preachers and Members of the Methodist Societies.

And, it appears to us, our adversaries have only three ways of justifying their opposition to us; either they must prove that we are mistaken in our views of Christianity, and that it is a different thing from what we judge it to be; or, secondly, though our ideas of Christianity be in general just, yet that it is not of such importance that any extraordinary zeal or diligence need be used to propagate it; or, thirdly, that if its propagation be of importance to mankind, yet that our plan of doing it, is not only not the best, but is neither justifiable on the ground of reason, Scripture, or Christian antiquity, nor attended with success. We conceive that few, if any, of our opponents will persist to attack us on either of the two former pleas. As to the *third*, we will not affirm that our plan of spreading Christianity is the best. We believe a better, and more successful plan would be, 1. That all the Clergy, Arch-Bishops, Bishops, Arch-Deacons, Deans, Prebends, Priests, Deacons, Rectors, Vicars, or Curates, with the Heads, Tutors, and Fellows of our Universities, and all Persons in Holy Orders, whatever, should become, what we are happy to believe many of them are, truly experienced, and pious Christians. 2. That they should all thoroughly understand, firmly believe, and faithfully preach, those great and important doctrines of the Holy Scriptures, which are so clearly set forth in the Articles, Homilies, and Liturgy of our Church. And, 3. That they should form Societies, or associations, of those, whom they are instrumental in turning from the evil of their ways, that such, being united in brotherly love, might watch over and edify each other, and, as members of one body, might each fulfil his proper office, and use the gift he has received in ministring to the good of the whole.

We have no doubt, but, as this plan would have more authority, it would have a greater and more general influence, than that which we pursue; that is, if the Lord should be pleased to countenance and bless it, as we doubt not, but he would. But as this has not yet taken place, we consider ourselves as being justified, on every principle of reason, religion, and morality, in endeavouring to supply the lack of service of the Clergy, in this most important matter, especially as God has undeniably crowned, and still continues to crown, our endeavours with manifest success, making us instrumental in turning many from the grossest vice to the practice of every Christian grace and virtue.*

It is on this ground we justify our conduct to ourselves, and conceive that, on the same ground, we can easily justify it to every true believer, and friend of genuine Christianity. "We see," to use, with very little alteration, Mr. Wesley's words, in his First Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, "and who does not? the numberless follies and miseries of our fellow creatures. We see on every side, either men of no religion at all, or men of a lifeless, formal religion. We are grieved at the sight, and should greatly rejoice, if by any means we might convince some, that there is a better religion to be attained, a religion worthy of God that gave it. And this we conceive to be no other than love; the love of God and of all mankind; the loving God with all our heart, and soul, and strength, as having first loved *us*, as the fountain of all the good we have received, and of all we ever hope to enjoy; and the loving every soul which God hath made, every man on earth, as our own soul.

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* "I am acquainted," says Dr. Aikins, in his *Tour through Wales*, "with no place, the manners of whose inhabitants are so unexceptionable, (as far at least as a stranger is enabled to judge of them,) as Amlwch: and the favourable opinion which I was led to entertain of them in visiting the town last year, is confirmed by what I have observed at present. Not a single instance have I known of drunkenness, not one quarrel have I witnessed, during two very crowded Market-days, and one of them a day of unusual indulgence, that I passed at this place: and I believe no gaol, or bridewell, or house of confinement, exists in the town or neighbourhood. Most of the Miners are Methodists, and to the prevalence of this religious Sect, is chiefly to be attributed the good order that is so conspicuous."

"This love we believe to be the medicine of life, the never-failing remedy, for all the evils of a disordered world, for all the miseries and vices of men. Wherever this is, there are virtue and happiness going hand in hand. There is humbleness of mind, gentleness, long-suffering, the whole image of God, and at the same time, a peace that passeth all understanding, and joy unspeakable and full of glory.

'Eternal sunshine of the spotless mind;
Each prayer accepted, and each wish resign'd:
Desires compos'd, affections ever even,
Tears that delight, and sighs that waft to heaven.'

"This religion we long to see established in the world, a religion of love, and joy, and peace, having its seat in the heart, in the inmost soul, but ever shewing itself, by its fruits, continually springing forth, not only in all innocence, (for love worketh no ill to his neighbour,) but likewise in every kind of beneficence, spreading virtue and happiness all around it.

"This religion many of us have been following after for many years; but all this time, seeking wis-

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dom we found it not; we were spending our strength in vain. And being now under full conviction of this, we declare it to all mankind: for we desire not that others should wander out of the way, as we have done before them; but rather that they may profit by our loss, that they may go, (though we did not, having then no man to guide us,) the straight way to the religion of love, even by faith.

" Now faith is πραγματων ελεγχος ου βλεπομενων, the demonstrative evidence of things unseen, the supernatural evidence of things invisible, not perceivable by eyes of flesh, or by any of our natural senses or faculties. Faith is that divine evidence, whereby the spiritual man discerneth God and the things of God. It is with regard to the spiritual world, what sense is with regard to the natural. It is the spiritual sensation of every soul that is born of God.

" Perhaps you have not considered it in this view; we will then explain it a little farther.

" Faith, according to the scriptural account, is the eye of the new-born soul. Hereby every true believer in God, as it were, 'seeth him who is invisible.' Hereby, (in a more particular manner since life and immortality have been brought to light by the gospel,) he 'seeth the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ;' and 'beholdeth what manner of love it is, which the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we' (who are born of the Spirit) 'should be called the sons of God.'

" It is the ear of the soul, whereby a sinner 'hears the voice of the Son of God and lives;' even that voice which alone wakes the dead, 'Son, thy sins are forgiven thee.'

" It is, (if we may be allowed the expression,) the palate of the soul; for hereby a believer 'tastes the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come; and hereby he both tastes and sees that God is gracious, yea, and merciful to him a sinner.'

" It is the feeling of the soul, whereby a believer perceives, through *the power of the Highest overshadowing him*, both the existence, and the presence of Him, in whom *he lives, moves, and has his being*: and indeed the whole invisible world, the entire system of things eternal. And hereby, in particular, he feels 'the love of God shed abroad in his heart.'

" 'By this faith we are saved,' from uneasiness of mind, from the anguish of a wounded spirit, from discontent, from fear, and sorrow of heart, and from that inexpressible listlessness and weariness, both of the world and of ourselves, which so many labour under for years; especially when they are out of the hurry of the world, and sink into calm reflection. In this we find that love of God, and of all mankind, which we had elsewhere sought in vain. This we know and feel, and therefore cannot but declare, saves every one that partakes of it, in proportion as it is possessed, both from sin and misery, from every unhappy and every unholy temper.

'Soft peace she brings, wherever she arrives,
She builds our quiet, as she forms our lives;
Lays the rough paths of peevish nature even,
And opens in each breast a little heaven.'

" Is there any thing here that is unreasonable? Is it not reasonable to love God? Hath he not given us life, and breath, and all things? Does he not still continue his love to us, filling our heart with food

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and gladness? What have we which we have not received of him? And does not love demand a return of love? Whether, therefore, we *do* love God, or not, we cannot but own it is reasonable so to do; nay, seeing he is the Parent of all good, to love him with all our heart.

"Is it not reasonable also to love our neighbour? Every man whom God hath made? Are we not brethren? The children of one Father? Ought we not then to love one another? And, should we only love them that love us? Is that acting like our Father which is in heaven? He causes his sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. And can there be a more equitable rule of our love, than 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself?' Surely all will *plead* for the reasonableness of this; as also for that golden rule, (the only adequate measure of brotherly love, in all our words and actions,) 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them.'

"Is it not reasonable then, that, as we have opportunity, we should do good unto all men? Not only to friends, but enemies; not only to the deserving, but likewise to the evil and unthankful? Is it not right that all our life should be one continued labour of love? If a day passes without doing good, may one not well say with Titus, *Amici, diem perdidi!* * And is it enough, to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to visit those who are sick or in prison? Should we have no pity for those

'Who sigh beneath guilt's horrid stain,
The worst confinement, and the heaviest chain?'

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* My friends, I have lost a day!

" Should we shut up our compassion toward those who are of all men most miserable, because they are miserable by their own fault? If we have found a medicine to heal even that sickness, should we not, as we have freely received it, freely give? Should we not pluck them as brands out of the fire? The fire of lust, anger, malice, revenge? The inmost soul answers, It should be done; it is reasonable in the highest degree. Well, this is the sum of our preaching, and of our lives, our enemies themselves being the judges. If, therefore, men allow that it is reasonable to love God, to love mankind, and to do good to all men, they cannot but allow, that religion which we preach and live, to be agreeable to the highest reason.

" Perhaps, 'all this may be borne. It is tolerable enough: and if we spoke only of being *saved by love*, many would have no great objection: but they do not comprehend what we say of being *saved by faith*.' By those words, then, *We are saved by faith*, we mean, that the moment a man receives that faith which is above described, he is saved in a great measure, from doubt, and fear, and sorrow of heart, by a peace that passes all understanding; from the heaviness of a wounded spirit, by joy unspeakable; and from his sins, of whatsoever kind they were; from his vicious desires, as well as words and actions, by the love of God and of all mankind, then shed abroad in his heart.

" We grant nothing is more unreasonable, than to imagine that such mighty effects as these can be wrought by tha poor, empty, insignificant thing, which the world *calls* Faith. But supposing there be such a faith on the earth, as that which the Apostle speaks of, such an intercourse between God and the soul; what is too hard for such a faith? Surely, 'all things are possible to him that thus believeth:' to him that thus *walks with God*, that is now a citizen of heaven, an inhabitant of eternity. If, therefore, any will contend with *us*, they must change the ground of their attack. They must flatly deny, there is any faith upon earth: but perhaps this they might think too large a step. They cannot do this, without a secret condemnation in their own breasts. O that they would at length cry to God for that heavenly gift! whereby alone this truly reasonable religion, this beneficent love of God and man, can be planted in their hearts!

"If any say, 'But those that profess this faith are the most unreasonable of all men;' we ask, Who are those that profess this faith?' Perhaps, those who speak thus, do not personally know such a man in the world. Who are they that so much as profess to have *this evidence* of things not seen? That profess, as it were, to *see him that is invisible?* To *hear the voice* of God, and to have 'his Spirit witnessing with their spirits, that they are the children of God?' We fear few will be found, that even profess *this faith*, among the large numbers of those who are called Believers.

"However, there are enow that profess themselves Christians. Yea, too many, God knoweth; too many that confute their vain professions, by the whole tenour of their lives. We will allow all that can be said on this head, and perhaps more than all. It was now some years," continues Mr. Wesley, "since I was engaged unawares in a conversation with a strong reasoner, who at first urged the wickedness of the American Indians, as a bar to our hope of converting them to Christianity. But when I mentioned their temperance, justice, and veracity, (according to the accounts I had then received,) it was asked, Why, if those heathens are such men as these, what will they gain by being made Christians? What would they gain by being *such Christians* as we see every where round about us? I could not deny, they would lose, not gain, by such a Christianity as this. Upon which she added, Why, what else do you mean by Christianity? My plain answer was, What do you apprehend to be more valuable than good sense, good nature, and good manners? All these are contained, and that in the highest degree, in what I mean by Christianity. Good sense, (so called,) is but a poor, dim shadow of what Christians call faith. Good nature is only a faint, distant resemblance of Christian charity. And good manners, if of the most finished kind that nature assisted by art can attain to, is but a dead picture of that holiness of conversation, which is the image of God visibly expressed. All these put together by the art of God, I call Christianity. Sir, if this be Christianity, (said my opponent in amaze,) I never saw a Christian in my life.'

" Perhaps, the case is the same with many of our opponents. If so, we are grieved for them, and can only wish, till they do see a living proof of this, that they would not say, they *see a Christian.* For this is scriptural Christianity, and this alone. An unreasonable man is no more a Christian, than he is an Angel. So far as he departs from true, genuine reason, so far he departs from Christianity. Let none say, this is only asserted, not proved. It is undeniably proved by the original charter of Christianity. We appeal to this, to the written word. If any man's temper, or words, or actions, are contradictory to right reason; it is evident to a demonstration, they are contradictory to this. Let any possible or conceivable instance be produced, and this will be found to be a fact. The lives, therefore, of those who are called Christians, are no just objection to Christianity.

" We join with our opponents, then, in desiring a religion founded on reason, and every way agreeable thereto. But one question still remains to be asked, What is meant by reason? We suppose, 'the eternal reason, or, the nature of things,' is meant hereby. 'The nature of God, and the nature of man, with the relations necessarily subsisting between them.' Why, this is the very religion we preach: a religion evidently founded on, and every way agreeable to, eternal reason, to the essential nature of things. Its foundation stands on the nature of God, and the nature of man, together with their mutual relations. And it is every way suitable thereto: to the nature of God; for it begins in knowing him, and where but in the true knowledge of God, can we conceive true religion to begin? It goes on in loving him, and all mankind, (for we cannot but imitate whom we love:) It ends in serving him; in doing his will; in obeying him whom we know and love.

" It is every way suited to the nature of man; for it begins in man's knowing himself; knowing himself to be what he really is, foolish, vicious, miserable. It goes on to point out the remedy for this, to make him truly wise, virtuous, and happy; as every thinking mind longs to be.

"It finishes all, by restoring the due relations between God and man: by uniting for ever the tender Father, and the grateful, obedient son; the great Lord of all, and the faithful servant, doing not his own will, but the will of Him that sent him.

"And if by reason be meant, the faculty of reasoning, of inferring one thing from another, we must observe, that we not only allow, but earnestly exhort all who seek after true religion, to use all the reason which God hath given them, in searching out the things of God. But our *reasoning justly*, not only on this, but on any subject whatever, pre-supposes true judgments already formed, whereon to ground our argumentation. Else, we shall stumble at every step: because, *ex falso non sequitur verum.* It is impossible, if our premises are false, to infer from them true conclusions.

"We know likewise, that before it is possible for us to form a true judgment of them, it is absolutely necessary, that we should have a clear apprehension of the things of God, and that our ideas thereof should be all fixed, distinct, and determinate. And seeing our ideas are not innate, but must all originally come from our senses, it is certainly necessary that we have senses capable of discerning objects of this kind. Not those only which are called *natural senses*, which in this respect profit little, as being altogether incapable of discerning objects of a spiritual kind; but spiritual senses, exercised to discern spiritual good and evil.

It is necessary that we have the hearing ear, and the seeing eye, emphatically so called; to be the evidence of things not seen, as our bodily senses are of visible things; that we may discern spiritual objects, and be furnished with ideas of what the outward 'eye hath not seen, neither the ear heard.'

"And till we have these internal senses; till the eyes of our understanding are opened, we can have no just apprehension of divine things. Nor, consequently, till then, can we either judge truly, or reason justly concerning them: seeing our reason has no ground whereon to stand, no materials to work upon.

"To use the trite instance. As we cannot reason concerning colours, if we have no natural sight, because all the ideas received by our other senses are of a different kind; so that neither our hearing, nor any other sense, can supply our want of sight, or furnish our reason in this respect with matter to work upon: so we cannot reason concerning spiritual things, if we have no spiritual sight; because all our ideas received by our outward senses are of a different kind. Yea, far more different from those received by faith or internal sensation, than the idea of colour from that of sound. These are only different species of one genus, namely, sensible ideas, received by external sensation: whereas, the ideas of faith differ *toto genere* from those of external sensation. So that it is not conceivable that external sensation should supply the want of internal senses; or furnish our reason, in this respect, with matter to work upon.

"What then will our reason do here? How will it pass from things natural to spiritual? From the things that are seen to those that are not seen? From the visible to the invisible world? What a gulf is here! By what art will reason get over the immense chasm? This cannot be till the Almighty come in to succour, and give us that faith which, perhaps, we have hitherto despised. Then, upborne as it were upon eagles' wings, we shall soar away into the regions of eternity; and our enlightened reason shall explore even *the deep things of God*, God himself *revealing them to us by his Spirit*.

"The above is spoken to those, chiefly, who do not receive the Christian system as of God. We would add a few words to another sort of men; (though not so much with regard to our principles or practice, as with regard to their own;) to you who do receive it, who believe the Scriptures, yet do not take upon you the character of religious men, we are obliged to address ourselves likewise, under the character of Men of Reason.

"We would only ask, Are you such indeed? Do you answer the character under which you appear? If so, you are consistent with yourselves. Your principles and practice agree together.

"Let us try whether this is so or not. Do you not take the name of God in vain? Do you remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy? Do you not speak evil of the ruler of your people? Are you not drunkards, or gluttons, faring as sumptuously as you can every day? Making gods of your bellies? Do you not avenge yourselves? Are you not whoremongers or adulterers? Answer plainly to your own heart, before God, the Judge of all.

"Why then do you say, you truly believe the Scriptures? If the Scriptures be true, you are in the broad way that leadeth to destruction. Your damnation slumbereth not. You are heaping up to yourselves wrath, against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. Doubtless, if the Scriptures be true, and you remain thus, it had been good for you, if you had never been born.

" How is it that you call yourselves Men of Reason? Is reason inconsistent with itself? You are the farthest of all men under the sun from any pretence to that character. A common swearer, a sabbath-breaker, a whoremonger, a drunkard, who says he believes the Scriptures are of God, is a monster upon earth, the greatest contradiction to his own, as well as to the reason of all mankind. In the name of God, (that worthy name whereby you are called, and which you daily cause to be blasphemed,) turn either to the right hand or to the left. Either profess you are Infidels, or be Christians. Halt no longer thus between two opinions. Either cast off the Bible, or your sins. And in the mean time, if you have any spark of your boasted reason left, do not ' count us your enemies,' (as we fear you have done hitherto, and as thousands do, wherever we have declared, 'They who do such things shall not inherit eternal life,') ' because we tell you the truth.' Seeing these are not our words, but the words of Him that sent us. Yea, though in doing this, we use great plainness of speech, as becomes the ministry we have received, ' For we are not as many who corrupt,' (cauponize, soften, and thereby adulterate,) ' the word of God. But as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God, speak we in Christ.'

" But it may be, you are none of these. You abstain from all such things. You are a man of honour, or a woman of virtue. You scorn to do an unhandsome thing, and are of an unblamable life and conversation. You are harmless, (if we understand you right,) and useless from morning to night. You do no hurt,—and no good to any one; no more than a straw floating upon the water. Your life glides smoothly on from year to year, and from one season to another; having no occasion to work,

‘You waste away
In gentle inactivity the day.’

“We will not now shock the easiness of your temper, by talking about a future state. But suffer us to ask you a question about present things. Are you now happy?

“‘I have seen,’ says Mr. Wesley, (Appeal, page 18,) ‘a large company of reasonable creatures, called Indians, sitting in a row on the side of a river, looking sometimes at one another, sometimes at the sky, and sometimes at the bubbles on the water. And so they sat, (unless in time of war,) for a great part of the year, from morning to night.’

“These were doubtless much at ease. But can you think they were happy?—And how little happier are you than they?

“You eat, and drink, and sleep, and dress, and dance, and sit down to play. You are carried abroad. You are at the masquerade, the theatre, the opera-house, the park, the levee, the drawing-room. What do you do there? Why sometimes you talk; sometimes you look at one another. And what are you to do to-morrow? The next day? The next year? You are to eat, and drink, and sleep, and dance, and dress, and play again. And you are to be carried abroad again, that you may again look at one another! And is this all? Alas, how little more happiness have you in this, than the Indians in looking at the sky or water!

"Ah poor, dull round! We do not wonder that Col. ——, or any man of reflection, should prefer death itself, even in the midst of his years, to such a life as this! and should frankly declare, 'that he chose to go out of the world, because he found nothing in it worth living for.'

"Yet it is certain there is business to be done: and many we find in all places, (not to speak of the vulgar, the drudges of the earth,) who are continually employed therein. Are you of that number? Are you engaged in trade, or some other reputable employment? Perhaps, profitable too; for you would not spend your time, and labour, and thought, for nothing. You are, then, making your fortune: you are getting money. True: but money is not your ultimate end. The treasuring up gold and silver, for its own sake, all men own, is as foolish and absurd, as grossly unreasonable, as the treasuring up spiders, or the wings of butterflies. You consider this but as a mean to some further end. And what is that? Why, the enjoying yourself, the being at ease, the taking your pleasure, the living like a gentleman. That is plainly, either the whole, or some part of, the happiness above described.

"Supposing, then, your end to be actually attained, suppose you have your wish, before you drop into eternity: go and sit down with *Thleeanowhee* and his companions on the river side.—After you have toiled for fifty years, you are just as happy as they.

"Can you, or any reasonable man, be *satisfied* with this? By no means. It is not possible you should. But what else can you do? You *would* have something better to employ your time; but you know not where to find it upon earth.

"And indeed it is obvious, that the earth, as it is now constituted, even with the help of all European arts, does not find sufficient employment, to take up half the waking hours of half its inhabitants.

"What, then, can you do? How can you employ the time that lies so heavy upon your hands? This very thing which you seek, declare we unto you. The thing you want is the religion we preach. That alone leaves no time upon our hands. It fills up all the blank spaces of life. It exactly takes up all the time we have to spare, be it more or less: so that 'he that hath much, hath nothing over, and he that has little, has no lack.'

"Once more. Can you, (or any man of reason,) think, you were made for the life you now lead? You cannot possibly think so; at least, not till you tread the Bible underfoot. The oracles of God bear you witness in every page, (and your own heart agreeth thereto,) that you were made in the image of God, an incorruptible picture of the God of glory. And what are you even in your present state? An everlasting spirit, going to God. For what end then did he create you, but to dwell with him, above this perishable world, to know him, to love him, to do his will, to enjoy him for ever and ever! O look more deeply into yourself; and into those Scriptures, which you profess to receive as the *word of God*, as *right concerning all things*. There you will find a nobler, happier state described, than, perhaps, it ever yet entered into your heart to conceive. But God hath now revealed it to all those who 'rejoice evermore, and pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks, and do his will on earth, as it is done in heaven.' For this you were made. Hereunto you are called. O be not disobedient unto the heavenly calling! At least, be not angry with those who would fain bring you to be a living witness of that religion, 'whose ways are indeed ways of pleasantness, and all her paths, peace.'

"Blessed be God! He hath not yet left himself without witness!

> 'All are not lost! There be, who faith prefer,
> Though few, and piety to God!'

Who know the power of faith, and are no strangers to that inward vital religion, 'the mind that was in Christ,' 'righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.' Of you who have 'tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,' we would be glad to learn, if we have *erred from the faith*, or walked contrary to 'the truth as it is in Jesus.' 'Let the righteous smite me friendly, and reprove me;' if haply that which is amiss may be done away, and what is wanting supplied, till we all come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

"Before we conclude, we cannot but intreat you, who know God, to review the whole matter from the foundation. Call to mind what the state of religion was, in our nation, a few years since. In whom did you find the holy tempers that were in Christ? Bowels of mercies, lowliness, meekness, gentleness, contempt of the world, patience, temperance, long-suffering! A burning love to God, rejoicing evermore, and in every thing giving thanks; and a tender love to all mankind, covering, believing, hoping, enduring all things? Perhaps, you did not know one such man in the world. But how many, that had all unholy tempers? What vanity and pride, what stubbornness and self-will, what anger, fretfulness, discontent, what suspicion and resentment, what inordinate affections, what irregular passions, what foolish and hurtful desires might you find, in those who are called the best of men! In those who made the strictest profession of religion! And how few did you know, who went so far as the profession of religion, who had even the form of godliness! Did you not frequently bewail, wherever your lot was cast, the general want of even outward religion? How few were seen at the public worship of God! How much fewer at the Lord's table! And was even this little flock zealous of good works, careful, as they had time, to do good to all men? On the other hand, did you not with grief observe outward irreligion in every place? Where could you be for one week, without being an eye or an ear witness of cursing, swearing, or profaneness, of sabbath-breaking or drunkenness, of quarrelling or brawling, of revenge or obscenity? Were these things done in a corner? Did not gross iniquity of all kinds overspread our land as a flood? Yea, and daily increase, in spite of all the opposition which the children of God did or could make against it.

"If you had been then told, that the jealous God would soon arise and maintain his own cause; that he would pour down his Spirit from on high, and renew the face of the earth; that he would shed abroad his love in the hearts of the outcasts of men, producing all holy and heavenly tempers, expelling anger, and pride, and evil desire, and all unholy and earthly tempers; causing outward religion, the work of faith, the patience of hope, the labour of love, to flourish and abound; and, wherever it spread, abolishing outward irreligion, destroying all the works of the devil: if you had been told, that this living knowledge of the Lord would, in a short space, overspread our land; yea, and daily increase, in spite of all the opposition which the devil and his children did or could make against it: would you not vehemently have desired to see that day, that you might bless God and rejoice therein?

"Behold, the day of the Lord is come. He is again visiting and redeeming his people. Having eyes, see ye not? Having ears, do ye not hear? Neither understand with your hearts? At this hour the Lord is rolling away our reproach. Already his standard is set up. His Spirit is poured forth on the outcasts of men, and his love shed abroad in their hearts. Love of all mankind, meekness, gentleness, humbleness of mind, holy and heavenly affections, do take place of hate, anger, pride, revenge, and vile or vain affections. Hence, wherever the power of the Lord spreads, springs outward religion in all its forms. The houses of God are filled: the table of the Lord is thronged on every side. And those who thus shew their love of God, shew they love their neighbour also, by being careful to maintain good works, by doing all manner of good (as they have time,) to all men. They are likewise careful to abstain from all evil. Cursing, sabbath-breaking, drunkenness, with all other (however fashionable) works of the devil, are not once named among them. All this is plain, demonstrable fact. For this also is not done in a corner. Now, do you acknowledge the day of your visitation? Do you bless God, and rejoice therein?

"What hinders? Is it this, that men say all manner of evil of those whom God is pleased to use as instruments in his work? O ye fools, did ye suppose the devil was dead? Or, that he would not fight for his kingdom? And what weapons shall he fight with, if not with lies? Is he not a liar, and the father of it? Suffer ye then thus far. Let the devil and his children say all manner of evil of us. And let them go on deceiving each other, and being deceived. But ye need not be deceived also.—Or, if you are, if you will believe all they say: be it so, that we are weak, silly, wicked men; without sense, without learning, without even a desire or design of doing good: yet we insist upon the fact. Christ is preached, and sinners are converted to God. This none but a madman can deny. We are ready to prove it by a cloud of witnesses. Neither, therefore, can the inference be denied, that God is now visiting his people. O that all men may know in this their day, the things that make for their peace!

"Upon the whole, to men of the world we would still recommend the known advice of Gamaliel: 'Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this work be of men, it will come to nought: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.' But unto you whom God hath chosen out of the world, we say, ye are our brethren, and of our Father's house, it behoveth you, in whatsoever manner ye are able, 'to strengthen our hands in God.' And this ye are all able to do; to wish us good luck in the name of the Lord, and, to pray continually, that none of 'these things may move us,' and that 'we may not count our lives dear unto ourselves, so that we may finish our course with joy, and the ministry which we have received of the Lord Jesus!'"

FINIS.

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